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Congressional Operations:

Congress Speaks --
A Survey of the 100th Congress

Center
for
Responsive
Politics

The Center for Responsive Politics was founded in January, 1983, to study Congress and find ways to make it more effective. This, the ninth publication of the Center, is a report on a survey conducted in the winter and spring of 1987 of 114 House and Senate members and 115 personal and committee staff in the 100th Congress. The survey explored member and staff reactions to work and life on Capitol Hill, including their views on the budget process, how they mange their time, the impact of money and campaign finance on Congress, the effectiveness of the press in communicating the work of Congress to the public, the strengths and weaknesses of the committee system, and what changes and reforms of Congress they would most like to see.

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Executive Summary

In the winter and spring of 1987 the Center for Responsive Politics conducted the first bicameral and bipartisan survey interviews of Members of Congress and personal and committee staff. Interviewers for the Center completed 114 member surveys and an additional 115 staff surveys. Members were asked for their thoughts on nearly every aspect of congressional life--from the budget and campaign finance systems, to the committee structure. This report represents the first time so many members and staff have commented in a survey on the state of Congress.

The message conveyed by the respondents is clear--members are frustrated and deeply concerned about the way Congress operates. Underlying the members' responses to these questions was a feeling that Congress is not as effective as it should be. Members themselves said throughout their interviews that reforms are needed, or legislative gridlock will become the norm of congressional life.

Looking at the results of the survey, it is not hard to see how Capitol Hill could reach a state of near-paralysis. Members say the budget process is not working, that they are over-scheduled, that they have to spend too much time on fundraising for their next campaign, and that they have little home life. Members on both sides of the aisle and from each chamber of Congress complained they do not have enough time to think, to talk with their aides, or even to confer with their colleagues. There is a sense of isolation among individuals and between the parties. The results also show sharp partisan divisions on certain issues. What sets this report apart is that the members themselves are voicing these sentiments, not just editorial writers and scholars.

Specifically, these detailed interviews probed respondents for their views on the budget, the committee system, the role of the press in covering Congress, the legislative schedule, the effect of Congress on personal time, the legislative leadership, the campaign finance system, and salary and ethics issues. These interviews yielded a great deal of information, and while the results indicated there were some disagreements between chambers or parties on some issues, there was frequent agreement in many cases.

Among the most notable responses from the members were:

The Need for Change

• When asked if changes were needed in Congress, 94.7 percent of members said yes. The most frequently mentioned reform was changing the legislative schedule, mentioned by 57 percent of all members. In another section of the survey, the members were asked about some specific reforms on the legislative calendar. In response to these questions, 64.6 percent said they favored reforming the current three-day-a-week schedule in favor of one requiring Congress to be in session five days a week, three weeks a month, with the remaining week reserved for work back in the district. Another 57.5 percent of members said they favored writing a formal bipartisan, bicameral legislative agenda at the beginning of each session--though more Representatives than Senators favored this approach.

• When Senators were asked about procedures unique to their chamber, 76.9 percent said they favored limiting filibusters on a motion to proceed to consideration of a bill, 74.1 percent supported curtailing or eliminating "holds," and 61.5 percent said they favored tougher germaneness rules.

The Budget Process

- On the budget, nearly half (49.1 percent) of all members believed the budget process weakened committee policy making. Only 6.1 percent said budgeting strengthened the committee policy making process, while 26.3 percent said it had no effect.

- While opinions were split on most of the other budget questions, there was overwhelming agreement on one reform proposal--85.8 percent of members responded favorably to a two-year budget proposal. In the Senate, 50 percent of Senators surveyed said they would favor abolishing the Appropriations Committee, giving its spending power to the authorizing committees.

How Members Spend Their Time

- Members expressed considerable frustration with how they have to spend their time on the Hill. When asked about their personal time, almost 80 percent of members said their schedule leaves little or no time for personal matters.

- When asked what changes they would make in their work day, 50 percent of members wanted to spend more time developing and discussing legislation among their colleagues and their staff. Another 50 percent wanted to spend less time meeting with interest groups on legislation, while another 45 percent believed they spent too much of their time raising campaign contributions.

The Campaign Finance System

- When asked about the campaign finance system, the members' replies were sharply split between chambers and parties. Almost half of Senators believe the campaign finance system makes legislators less willing to compromise--less than a third of Representatives said the same.

- A little less than 54 percent of Senators thought Political Action Committees (PACs) have had a negative effect on Congress, while some 40.2 percent of Representatives did. Among all members, 20.4 percent said that campaign contributions do influence votes in Congress.

- When asked to choose among eight campaign finance reforms they might support, slightly more than half of Democrats picked public financing as their "most liked" reform, while slightly less than half of Republicans said it was their "least liked" reform.

Salaries and Honoraria

- When asked what they thought was a reasonable salary for legislators, slightly more than half of members believed their jobs were worth more than the $89,500 they are now paid. When asked how salaries should be set, 56 percent of members saying congressional salaries should be set by a straight majority vote by both chambers.

- When members were asked if they would accept higher salaries in return for a ban on receiving honoraria from outside interest groups, 67 percent said yes.

Press Coverage and Public Understanding of Congress

- Overall, 58 percent of members believed their local press and 66.1 percent believed the network television news were not providing the public with enough information on the work of Congress.

- However, 79 percent thought newspapers with a national reputation--for example, the New York *Times*, Washington *Post* and Wall Street *Journal* and others--did provide the public with enough information on legislative activity.

The Committee System

- The survey indicated that 65.8 percent of members responded favorably when asked if they wanted to see a reduction in the number of subcommittees. However, this support was not evenly split among parties, as 85 percent of Republicans and 50.8 percent of Democrats said they favored reductions.

- A little over 80 percent of members said they favored having more joint committee hearings within their chamber.

* * *

The report that follows presents many of the concerns members and staff have about the way Congress operates, and lists some of the solutions offered by members themselves. The members did emphasize some of the strengths of Congress and attributed much of their frustration to deep policy differences among themselves and between Congress and the White House. But the results of the survey also emphasize that current rules and organization of Congress do little to help forge constructive consensus out of the many pressures to which the institution is subjected.

These problems can and should be addressed by legislation and rules that would make Congress a more effective institution. But to make Congress more effective, members must want change; this report shows that many members do.

The Center will continue to work closely with members of Congress and the public interested in pursuing what this survey demonstrates about how Congress works today and how it might work differently in the future.

This report summarizes the key findings of the survey and offers a number of quotes gleaned from the interviews. This report has focused principally on the members' responses, though staff responses are included in those cases where their responses differed sharply from those of the members or for certain questions that were asked of staff only. The relevant charts to each chapter immediately follow the text of each chapter. The Introduction of this report is an overview of the Center's survey and general findings. Chapter 1 reports on what changes members and staff believed were most needed in Congress. Chapter 2 covers the responses to the budget questions. Chapter 3 discusses several aspects of how members manage their time. Chapter 4 summarizes the responses to questions on campaign finance, salaries, honoraria, and certain ethics issues. Chapter 5 summarizes the member and staff responses to questions on congressional committee structure. Chapter 6 covers members and staff reactions to how the press covers Congress. Chapter 7 provides technical information on the survey.

A Note on the Charts

The charts following each section summarize the statistical results covered in that section. Each chart provides the results by members, personal staff, and committee staff. The percentage in each case indicates the percent of resonpondents who gave that answer. The charts themselves are organized by party and chamber results, with each chart containing a "Total" column, providing results of all the respondents. In some cases, questions asked of one group were not asked of others. In those cases, the charts indicate which groups responded to the question. Because some questions were opened ended, mutliple responses were allowed. Charts on questions where more than one answer was allowed are marked "multiple responses allowed." At the bottom of each chart, the number of respondents who answered the question is indicated by "n=" which is the notation for "size of sample."

Introduction:
The State of Congress

Between the 1960s and late 1970s, a reform movement led by several members attempted to change how Congress worked. Many of the changes, particularly in the House, were designed to reduce the power of the seniority system and committee chairmen, while giving more power to less senior members. Other reforms made in this period revamped the budget process and changed the organizational structure of Congress, particularly with respect to the number and jurisdictional scope of committees and the budget process. The result of this reform movement was that Congress was a fundamentally different institution in 1980 from the one it was in 1960. By 1980, the role of seniority and the power of committee chairmen had been reduced in the House, while the entire committee structure in the Senate had been overhauled.

Much of this reform effort was rooted in the policy climate of the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960s, the civil rights movement, the war on poverty, the "Great Society" programs, and other social policies led to demands by members of Congress for a larger role in legislative policy making. But the demands of those who wanted a larger policy making role conflicted with the power of the seniority and committee system. This conflict sparked a series of reforms that broadened opportunities for individual members to have a larger role in making legislative policy.

However, the focus of national policy in the 1980s has shifted. Budget demands seemingly dominate policy considerations and Congress spends more time to get through its expanding workload. Probably one of the best indicators of this growth in the legislative workload is the size of a typical bill. In 1962, the average congressional bill was 2.3 pages long; in 1982, the average was 9.2 pages per bill. Part of the reason for this increase in legislative work can be directly attributed to the changes made during the reform period. Power was centralized during the era of seniority and the strong committee, but the reform period created a more diffuse system of power in Congress. This diffuse system of power created more opportunities for members to legislate, but it also created a system where several competing forces vied to influence policy.

Although most members appreciate the new opportunities and power achieved during the reform movement, they still to complain about the disorganized nature of congressional operations. But while many members continue to discuss additional changes in Congress' operations and structure, it has been five years since the last comprehensive reform committee was convened in the Senate, seven years in the House. Does this lack of action indicate members are resigned to the current state of Congress? Or is there a lack of consensus on what Congress can or should do? It was to find the answers to these questions that prompted the Center to undertake its survey.

Surveys and Congress

Academics, reformers, and members of Congress themselves have used surveys to "take a snapshot" of congressional opinion at a given time. Sometimes the reason for surveying members and staff has simply been to obtain more information and insight into Congress. Surveys have also been used by groups like the Democratic Study Group, Common Cause, congressional committees and others as way to gauge support for or opposition to a particular set of reform proposals.

However, many of the surveys were, for good reason, targeted to a specific chamber or even to a specific party within one chamber. Bicameral, bipartisan surveys by either academics or groups advocating a specific objective, are rare. This survey is the first bipartisan survey of Representatives, Senators, personal and committee staff.

The Center for Responsive Politics undertook this survey to assess how Senators, Representatives and staff felt about the way Congress works, what their reactions to some specific reform proposals are, and what, if anything, they would most like to see changed. The final questionnaires included open and closed ended questions on nine principal topics: the budget process, the committee system, the press's coverage of Congress, how members manage their professional and personal time, legislative procedures, the party leadership, the role of campaign finance, and questions on salary and ethics issues. Also included were three general open ended questions to open and close the interviews. The first question asked respondents about what most surprised them about Congress. The last two questions asked respondents what they would most like to see changed in Congress, and how long they planned to work on Capitol Hill. These general questions were designed to get members to talk openly about any congressional topic or issue that most concerned them.

In all, the Center interviewed 114 Senators and Representatives and an additional 115 personal and committee staff. Most ot the interviews averaged some 30 to 45 minutes, though one Senator gave a Center interviewer 90 minutes. The results from this sample covered hundreds of pages of statistical material. For this summary report, the Center focused on member responses, citing staff in those cases where their answers were sharply different from those of the members, or in those cases where a question was asked of staff only. The tables following each chapter provides complete information on all the survey results from members and staff, cross-referenced by parties and chambers.

A Desire for More Coherence

The general sense of Congress conveyed by members was that its operation is too chaotic and that this has a negative affect on the quality of policy making and the quality of their personal lives. Moreover, the members were not satisfied with this situation. When asked if they would like to see changes made in Congress, 94.7 percent of members said yes. And the leading change that 57 percent of members want most are chanings in legislative scheduling--from when legislation appears on the floor to how they spend their time in Washington and back in the home districts.

This desire for more predictability reflects a belief that a more predictable schedule would allow members to better use their time. By the same token, many of the answers indicated substantial frustration with the chaotic operation of Congress. Most members said "inefficiency" was what surprised them the most when they first arrived in Washington. Answers to questions about specific reforms also indicated a desire for more organization: members supported a two-year budget cycle, a formal legislative agenda at the start of the session, a reduction in the number of subcommittees, and changes in how their time is managed. For example, an overwhelming majority felt the work of Congress now leaves them little or no time to spend with family and friends. About half of members felt that they needed more time to discuss and develop legislation among themselves and with their staffs. An equal number felt that the demands of fundraising interfered with the time they spent on legislative work.

However this desire for a more orderly work schedule is not evenly divided between chambers. Overall, House members had fewer complaints than Senators. Part of the reason for this is probably because the larger House relies more than does the Senate on its committee structure and rules in making policy. Accordingly, the changes Representatives tended to favor were those in the rules, such as a formal legislative agenda. In the Senate, legislators must deal with the same workload as Representatives, but there are a fewer members to share the workload and the Senate's legislative procedures are far more informal than those in the House. Consequently, Senators are more aware of the extend to which their time is at a premium and were more willing to support reforms that would give them more time. For example, Senators were far more likely to support campaign finance limits. Most surprising was that 50 percent of the Senators interviewed would also go much further on changing the budget process than their House counterparts. These Senators would do away with the Appropriations Committee and transfer its spending power to the authorizing committees, reducing the budget process by one whole step.

Policy Implications of Proposed Reforms

These survey results among the members do not indicate a shift away from the changes made by past reformers; rather, they indicate a shift in priorities. Both the reformers of the 1960s and 1970s and today's members were concerned about the "nuts and bolts" of how things got done. But for earlier reformers, the focus was on spreading power and opportunity to more members and, to a lesser extent, structural reforms in the committee system. Today's members seem more interested in adding greater order to the congressional schedule, both to improve how legislation is managed and to improve the quality of their lives.

But one should not assume that these results indicate a desire by members to return to the days of seniority rule. Instead, members would prefer to "fine tune" the past reforms to improve the way legislation is written and enacted. Members supporting such organizational changes would argue that greater efficiency and coherence in operations would improve the quality of legislation that is written. And others would argue that greater predictability in the calendar leads to less frustration and that might lead to fewer early retirements.

However, while they might want a more orderly work schedule, many of the reforms they supported would have a significant on the impact of legislation considered by Congress. Because of the nature of Congress as a policy making institution, any change in procedure is likely to affect policy making in the rest of the nation. For that reason, the Center's survey results showing a desire for more organization and predictability would have a significance far beyond the halls of the Capitol.

For example, a majority of members supported having the House and Senate leadership write an agenda of key legislative priorities for the coming session and making any departures from this agenda subject to points of order on the floor. Many members supported this proposal as a way of achieving predictability in the legislative calendar. At first glance, such an agenda would seem to be of interest only to members of Congress. But the implications of a legislative agenda go beyond a simple matter of how Congress organizes its time. By announcing a specific agenda well in advance of the session, members of Congress would be assuming a more assertive role in making policy. Such an assertive role has implications for executive/congressional relations because the legislative agenda could either enhance or compete with a president's policy agenda. Such an agenda also means Congress must make decisions on which issues it will act on in a session and which issues it will not. Thus the legislative agenda could also sharpen the public debate on these issues by providing the public and the press with a clear guideline of congressional priorities.

Similarly the support for a two-year budget demonstrates how a seemingly technical change would have an impact beyond Capitol Hill. On one level, a two-year budget process is a way to improve how Congress writes a budget by giving authorizing and appropriating committees more time to plan and pass programs. Supporters of a two year also argue that such a process would give committees more time to do oversight. But if the process was expanded to two years, budgetary planning for the executive branch would also have to be changed to accommodate the new schedule.

The survey results showing that members would like more organization in Congress are consistent with events of the last few years. Since 1979, both Houses have attempted, with varying success, to limit subcommittee growth, and to change the rules to give leadership more power in setting the legislative calendar and, in the Senate, to change the rules on filibusters and germaneness requirements. But the survey results indicate that members would like to see still more done in terms of how Congress operates.

But even with a strong consensus for reform, achieving change within the halls of the Capitol remains another problem. Even though members want to see more predictability and organization in Congress, there is no guarantee that it will happen. It often is just as difficult to pass a procedural change in Congress as it is to pass a budget--and certainly a budget will always have a higher priority in most members' minds. Whether the members' desire for more organization in Congress will result in action in the near future will depend on the members themselves. It will take time and work to build a consensus for change within Congress.

The Center will to follow up on these survey results by further analyzing their implications of these results, by presenting its findings to the public, and by working with members of Congress interested in exploring proposals to improve the way in which Congress works.

1

The Need for Change

The respondents were asked if they thought any changes were needed in Congress and, if so, what changes were most needed. This was an open-ended question that was asked to give the respondents an opportunity to raise any of these concerns that might or might not have been covered by the other survey questions. If a respondent said change was needed, the Center took every answer given, a procedure that lead to a number of multiple answers for most respondents.

Among members, an overwhelming 94.7 percent said some changes were needed in Congress. Only 3.5 percent said no changes were needed in Congress, and another 1.8 percent gave "mixed" answers, such as that of the member who said, "I think some changes are needed, but I am not sure what is most needed."

When asked to elaborate on the changes they thought were needed most, 57 percent of members mentioned reforming the legislative schedule and calendar. Among the 57 percent of those members who favored schedule reforms were; 21.1 percent who simply said the schedule needed reform, 14.9 percent who asked for a "predictable" legislative schedule, and 7 percent who said they wanted a more "efficient" schedule.

Budget reform was second most often mentioned by 31.6 percent of members. However, almost twice as many Republicans, 42.8 percent, gave this answer, as compared to 23.1 percent of Democrats. Most of the respondents mentioned the need for budget reforms in general. Specific reforms mentioned included the two-year budget, mentioned by 6.1 percent of respondents. Senators, by a 11.1 percent to 4.6 percent margin, mentioned the biennial budget more frequently than did Representatives. Two other budget reforms, a line item veto and a balanced budget amendment, were mentioned by 2.6 percent of respondents.

Campaign finance reform was the third most frequently mentioned change, mentioned by 21.2 percent of all members. This reform was more likely to be given by Democrats and Senators, than by Republicans and Representatives. Among Democrats, 29.2 percent mentioned campaign finance reform, as compared with 10.2 percent of Republicans. The number of Senators mentioning this reform, however, totaled 37 percent as opposed to 16.1 percent of Representatives.

Reforming the committee system was the fourth most frequently mentioned item overall, with 20.2 percent of members suggesting some kind of change. There was a slight party difference in this category, with Republicans being slightly more inclined to mention committee reform by a 24.5 percent to 16.9 percent margin.

The remaining answers were scattered among several other categories, none of which received more than 15 percent, though there were two significant findings among them. The first, limiting the length of House terms, received 12.3 percent overall. The second was "more limits on the individual freedom" of members. While this received only 7 percent overall and 3.4 percent among House members, 18.5 percent of Senators gave this response.

A little over 95 percent of personal staff also felt some changes were needed in Congress, and both personal and committee staff listed the same four leading answers as the members, though staff gave them different emphases. For example, the leading answer among personal staff was budgetary reform, mentioned by 41 percent of the respondents. Running a close second with 39.3 percent of the personal staff responses was reforming the legislative schedule. Working toward a more "predictable" or "efficient" schedule was the leading answer in this category. Campaign finance reform and committee reform tied for third among personal staff, each being mentioned by 26.2 percent of the respondents.

Among committee staff, 96.2 percent thought some changes were needed in Congress, as opposed to 3.8 percent who said they "didn't know." Interestingly, 100 percent of Republican committee staff believed changes were needed in how Congress operates. The committee staff responses were concentrated in five categories. Two categories--committee reorganization and scheduling reforms--tied for first, each being mentioned by 35.8 percent of the respondents. Not surprisingly, both these categories have a direct bearing on the work of this group of respondents. Budget reform was next, mentioned by 28.3 percent of committee staff. Two other answers were given by 18.9 percent of committee staff--campaign finance reform and staff issues--such as salary, crowded working conditions and so on.

Are Changes Needed In How Congress Works?
(by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Yes	94.3%	96.3%	94.7%	93.5%	100.0%	95.1%	96.4%	95.8%	96.2%
No	3.4	3.7	3.5	2.2	-	1.6	-	-	-
Not sure / no opinion	2.3	-	1.8	4.3	-	3.3	3.6	4.2	3.8%
n=	*87*	*27*	*114*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*26*	*26*	*52*

Are Changes Needed In How Congress Works?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Yes	92.3%	97.9%	**94.7%**	94.6%	95.8%	**95.1%**	92.3%	100.0%	**96.2%**
No	6.2	-	**3.5**	2.7	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
Not sure / no opinion	1.5	2.1	**1.8**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	7.7	-	**3.8**
n =	*65*	*49*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*28*	*24*	***52***

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Total, Scheduling Reform Responses	**54.0%**	**66.7%**	**57.0%**	**41.3%**	**33.3%**	**39.3%**	**25.0%**	**48%**	**35.8%**
General responses on changing the schedule	20.7	22.2	**21.1**	8.7	-	**6.6**	-	-	-
"A more predictable schedule"	12.6	22.2	**14.9**	8.7	6.7	**8.2**	14.3	20.0	**17.0**
Schedule more time in the district/state	6.9	7.4	**7.0**	-	-	-	7.1	4.0	**5.7**
"A more efficient schedule"	5.7	11.1	**7.0**	13.0	13.3	**13.1**	3.6	8.0	**5.7**
Return to the citizen legislature role	3.4	3.7	**3.5**	4.3	4.3	**4.3**	-	4.0	**1.9**
Improve coordination between committee work and floor schedule	3.4	-	**2.6**	-	-	-	-	8.0	**3.8**
Design a schedule to get more work done	1.1	-	**.9**	6.7	6.5	**6.6**	-	4.0	**1.9**
Total, Budget Reform Responses	**32.2**	**29.6**	**31.6**	**39.1**	**46.7**	**41.0**	**25.0**	**32.0**	**28.3**
General responses on reforming the budget process	21.8	14.8	**20.2**	34.8	46.7	**37.7**	21.4	24.0	**15.1**
Two year budget process	4.6	11.1	**6.1**	2.2	-	**1.6**	3.6	8.0	**13.2**
Balanced budget amendment	3.4	-	**2.6**	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
Line item veto	2.3	3.7	**2.6**	-	-	-	-	-	-

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Chamber, continued)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Total, Campaign finance reform responses	**16.1%**	**37.0%**	**21.1%**	**17.4%**	**53.3%**	**26.2%**	**21.4%**	**16.0%**	**18.9%**
General responses on changing the campaign finance system	13.8	37.0	**19.3**	15.2	40.0	**21.3**	17.9	8.0	**13.2**
Campaign spending limits	2.3	-	**1.8**	-	-	-	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Provide for public campaign financing	-	-	-	2.2	13.3	**4.9**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Total, Committee reform responses	**19.5**	**22.2**	**20.2**	**26.1**	**26.7**	**26.2**	**42.9**	**28.0**	**35.8**
Reduce the number of subcommittees	8.0	14.0	**9.6**	15.2	20.0	**16.4**	25.0	12.0	**25.0**
Restructure committee system/improve coordination of jurisdictions	8.0	7.4	**7.9**	10.9	6.7	**9.8**	10.7	12.0	**11.3**
Rotate committee memberships or change distribution of committee assignments	3.4	-	**2.6**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Give committee chairmen more authority over subcommittees	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.1	4.0	**5.7**
Total, Changing terms of service responses	**12.6**	**11.1**	**12.3**	**8.7**	**6.7**	**8.2**	**3.6**	**4.0**	**3.8**
Increase House terms from two to four years	9.2	7.4	**8.8**	8.7	-	**6.6**	-	-	-
Limit overall terms of service	2.3	3.7	**2.6**	-	6.7	**1.6**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
General responses on length of terms	1.1	-	**.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Party, continued)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Total, Salary reform responses	**9.2%**	**10.2%**	**10.5%**	**2.7%**	**4.2%**	**3.3%**	**14.8%**	**7.6%**	**11.3%**
Increase members' salaries	7.6	2.0	**5.3**	-	-	-	14.8	7.6	**11.3**
Create a procedure to better set member salaries	-	6.1	**2.6**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provide a housing allowance	1.5	2.0	**1.8**	-	-	-	-	-	-
General responses on salary	1.5	-	**.9**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	-	-	-
Total, Change partisan balance responses	**1.5**	**18.4**	**8.7**	-	**16.7**	**6.6**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Party rules need more balance	-	8.2	**3.5**	-	8.3	**3.3**	-	-	-
Congress needs more Republicans	-	6.1	**2.6**	-	4.2	**1.6**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Congress needs to be less partisan	1.5	4.1	**2.6**	-	4.2	**1.6**	-	-	-
Total, Reforms in Hill staffing responses	**9.2**	**8.2**	**8.7**	**5.4**	**8.3**	**6.6**	**18.5**	**19.2**	**18.9**
Reduce overall number of staff	4.6	4.1	**4.4**	-	-	-	11.1	15.4	**13.2**
Increase overall number of staff	4.6	2.0	**3.5**	-	4.2	**1.6**	3.7	-	**1.9**
Improved regulation of staff activities	-	2.0	**.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-
More staff training	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.7	-	**1.9**
More coordination of staff work	-	-	-	2.7	-	**1.6**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Improve staff working conditions	-	-	-	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	-	-	-

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Chamber, continued)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
There needs to be less individual freedom among members	3.4	18.5	**7.0**	0%	0%	**0%**	0%	0%	**0%**
Prevent time wasting procedures	4.6	7.4	**5.3**	8.7	13.3	**9.8**	-	8.0	**3.8**
Manage Capitol Hill resouces better	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	4.3	-	**3.3**	7.1	8.0	**7.5**
Stronger leadership is needed	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	8.7	13.3	**9.8**	7.1	-	**3.8**
Rules need to be better enforced	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	4.3	-	**3.3**	7.1	4.0	**5.7**
More long range planning is needed	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	6.5	6.7	**6.6**	3.6	8.0	**5.7**
Response making a specific policy suggestion	2.3	3.7	**2.6**	2.2	-	**1.6**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Need for more bicameral coordination	4.6	-	**2.6**	4.3	-	**3.3**	-	-	**-**
"Congress needs deep, systemic changes" (such as a unicameral legislature, and so on)	1.5	-	**.9**	-	-	**-**	-	-	**-**
Other	5.7	14.8	**7.9**	10.9	13.3	**11.5**	7.1	28.0	**17.0**
n=	*86*	*26*	*112*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*28*	*53*

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Total, Scheduling Reform Responses	**53.8%**	**61.2%**	**57.0%**	**40.5%**	**37.5%**	**39.3%**	**33.3%**	**38.5%**	**35.8%**
General responses on changing the schedule	24.6	16.3	**21.1**	8.1	4.2	**6.6**	-	-	-
"A more predictable schedule"	12.3	18.4	**14.9**	8.1	8.3	**8.2**	18.5	15.4	**17.0**
Schedule more time in the district/state	7.7	6.1	**7.0**	-	-	-	-	7.7	**5.7**
"A more efficient schedule"	7.7	6.1	**7.0**	16.2	8.3	**13.1**	3.7	7.7	**5.7**
Return to the citizen legislature role	-	8.2	**3.5**	2.7	8.3	**4.3**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Improve coordination between committee work and floor schedule	-	6.1	**2.6**	-	-	-	7.4	-	**3.8**
Design a schedule to get more work done	1.5	-	**.9**	5.4	8.3	**6.6**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Total, Budget Reform Responses	**23.1**	**42.8**	**31.6**	**35.1**	**50.0**	**41.0**	**11.1**	**46.2**	**28.3**
General responses on reforming the budget process	13.8	28.5	**20.2**	32.4	45.8	**37.7**	3.7	26.9	**15.1**
Two year budget process	6.1	6.1	**6.1**	2.7	-	**1.6**	7.4	19.2	**13.2**
Balanced budget amendment	-	6.1	**2.6**	-	4.2	**1.6**	-	-	-
Line item veto	3.1	2.0	**2.6**	-	-	-	-	-	-

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Party, continued)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Total, Campaign finance reform responses	**29.2%**	**10.2%**	**21.1%**	**37.8%**	**12.5%**	**26.2%**	**22.2%**	**15.4%**	**18.9%**
General responses on changing the campaign finance system	26.2	10.2	**19.3**	29.7	12.5	**21.3**	11.1	15.4	**13.2**
Campaign spending limits	3.1	-	**1.8**	-	-	-	7.4	-	**3.8**
Provide for public campaign financing	-	-	-	8.1	-	**4.9**	3.7	-	**3.8**
Total, Committee reform responses	**16.9**	**24.5**	**20.2**	**29.7**	**20.8**	**26.2**	**25.9**	**46.2**	**35.8**
Reduce the number of subcommittees	9.2	10.2	**9.6**	18.9	12.5	**16.4**	14.8	23.1	**25.0**
Restructure committee system/improve coordination of jurisdictions	7.7	8.2	**7.9**	10.8	8.3	**9.8**	3.7	19.2	**11.3**
Rotate committee memberships or change distribution of committee assignments	-	6.1	**2.6**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Give committee chairmen more authority over subcommittees	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.4	3.7	**5.7**
Total, Changing terms of service responses	**12.3**	**12.2**	**12.3**	**5.4**	**12.5**	**8.2**	**3.7**	**3.8**	**3.8**
Increase House terms from two to four years	10.8	6.1	**8.8**	5.4	8.3	**6.6**	-	-	-
Limit overall terms of service	-	6.1	**2.6**	-	4.2	**1.6**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
General responses on length of terms	1.5	-	**.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Chamber, continued)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Total, Salary reform responses	**10.3%**	**11.1%**	**10.5%**	**2.2%**	**6.7%**	**3.3%**	**10.7%**	**12.0%**	**11.3%**
Increase members' salaries	5.7	3.7	**5.3**	-	-	-	10.7	12.0	**11.3**
Create a procedure to better set member salaries	1.1	7.4	**2.6**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provide a housing allowance	2.3	-	**1.8**	-	-	-	-	-	-
General responses on salary	1.1	-	**.9**	2.2	-	**3.3**	-	-	-
Total, Change partisan balance responses	**11.5**	-	**8.7**	**8.7**	-	**6.6**	**3.6**	-	**1.9**
Party rules need more balance	3.4	-	**3.5**	4.3	-	**3.3**	-	-	-
Congress needs more Republicans	4.7	-	**2.6**	2.2	-	**1.6**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Congress needs to be less partisan	3.4	-	**2.6**	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
Total, Reforms in Hill staffing responses	**9.2**	**7.4**	**8.7**	**8.7**	-	**6.6**	**25.0**	**12.0**	**18.9**
Reduce overall number of staff	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	-	-	-	21.4	4.0	**13.2**
Increase overall number of staff	4.6	-	**3.5**	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	4.0	**1.9**
Improved regulation of staff activities	-	3.7	**.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-
More staff training	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.6	-	**1.9**
More coordination of staff work	-	-	-	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	4.0	**1.9**
Improve staff working conditions	-	-	-	4.3	-	**3.3**	-	-	-

What Two or Three Changes In How Congress Operates Would You Most Like To See? (by Party, continued)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
There needs to be less individual freedom among members	6.2	8.2	**7.0**	0%	0%	**0%**	0%	0%	**0%**
Prevent time wasting procedures	6.2	4.1	**5.3**	13.5	4.2	**9.8**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
Manage Capitol Hill resouces better	1.5	8.2	**4.4**	5.4	-	**3.3**	11.1	3.8	**7.5**
Stronger leadership is needed	6.2	2.0	**4.4**	13.5	4.2	**9.8**	3.7	-	**(3.8)**
Rules need to be better enforced	3.1	2.0	**4.4**	-	8.3	**3.3**	11.1	-	**5.7**
More long range planning is needed	6.2	2.0	**4.4**	8.1	4.2	**6.6**	11.1	-	**5.7**
Response making a specific policy suggestion	1.5	4.1	**2.6**	-	4.2	**1.6**	3.7	–	**1.9**
Need for more bicameral coordination	4.6	-	**2.6**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	-	-	-
"Congress needs deep, systemic changes" (such as a unicameral legislature, and so on)	-	2.0	**.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	10.7	2.0	**7.9**	13.5	8.3	**11.5**	11.1	23.0	**17.0**
n=	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

2

The Budget

"Nowadays the budget process runs the committee system, yet we have only been able to complete one budget on time here in the last 11 years." --a Democratic Senator

The power of Congress over the federal purse rests in Article I, Section 9, of the Constitution--"No Money shall be Drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law." However, while the Constitution refers to the appropriating process, Congress has, since the beginning of the Republic, used the additional step of authorizing money for programs before passing an appropriations bill. For that reason, budgetary work in Congress is divided between authorizing committees and the appropriations committees.

Before the Civil War, budgeting was a fairly informal process. The expenses of the Civil War and Reconstruction led to the creation of the House Appropriations Committee in 1865 and the Senate Appropriations Committee in 1867 to better manage the budget. Even with these committees, the budget process remained fairly informal. Executive agencies and the White House asked congressional committees to approve funds as needed. The Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 changed that procedure by requiring the president to write an annual budget for consideration by Congress. In the 1940s and 1950s, there was a subtle shift in congressional budgeting that increased the power of the authorizing committees. Prior to that time, federal agencies and programs usually had a continuing or permanent authorization, and the appropriations committees updated spending on a yearly basis. But shortly after the Second World War, many authorizing committees began to use yearly authorization bills, allowing these committees to review programs and policies on an annual basis.

But the new power of the authorizing committees also led to greater decentralization of the budget process. Congressional reformers succeeded in passing the Budget Act of 1974 to give more order to the process and to improve budget planning. Since it was not possible to induce the authorizing and appropriating committees to give up some of their power, reformers created a Budget Committee with the power to coordinate budget planning and to write bills to reconcile the differences among the other committees.

While the Budget Act did add some more organization to the process, delays in the federal budget continued. Because it has been difficult for members to complete the 13 appropriations bills required by law, Congress increasingly relies on Continuing Resolutions to manage the budget. Continuing Resolutions were originally designed to provide temporary "stop gap" funding for a particular agency or program. But Continuing Resolutions have been used to fund programs for an entire year when Congress was unable to resolve its differences on a budget. Many members have complained that we are becoming a "government by Continuing Resolution."

Continued concern about the federal deficit led to the enactment of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings (GRH) deficit reduction legislation in 1985. The legislation, written by Senators Phil Gramm (R-TX), Warren Rudman (R-NH), and Fritz Hollings (D-SC), required committees to meet specific deficit reduction targets over the next five years. Should Congress fail to meet those targets, a series of automatic spending cuts would take place in what is known as the budget sequester. The GRH provisions requiring congressional committees to submit budgets that conform to the annual targets are still in force. In 1986, the Supreme Court ruled that the plan for automatic cuts was unconstitutional, though revisions to GRH in 1987 created new procedures for automatic cuts.

2.1 Reactions to the Budget Process

When members were asked, "What impact has the budget process had on your committee's ability to make policy?" 49.1 percent felt that the budget process had weakened policy making, 26.3 percent said it had little or no effect, 12.3 percent said "other"--for example, that policies, not the process, were the problem, and 5.3 percent said the effect of the budget process varied among committees. Only 6.1 percent said the current budget process strengthened policy making.

Senators felt more strongly about the impact of the budget process on the ability of their committees to make polcy. Two-thirds of Senators said the budget process weakens their committee's policy making function, while 14.8 percent said it had little effect. Only one Senator said the budget process has strengthened policy making, saying, "It has a dramatic effect on policy making, in cutting taxes and controlling spending, but it hasn't gone far enough." In the House, 43.7 percent of members said the process has weakened policy making, while 29.9 percent said it had no effect.

Most of the comments from Representatives and Senators reflected a belief that the budget process is not working. One House Democrat flatly stated, "The Budget Act [of 1974] has been a failure. Fortunately, this need not be a permanent affliction." A House Republican said, "I'm just so surprised at how convoluted and difficult the whole [budget process] is. This is more surprising when you consider the system was supposed to involve more members in making decisions, yet the whole thing is unworkable."

One House Democrat summarized the decline of authorizing committees in the budget process: "It's harder and harder to justify the process, especially to younger [House] members. We have to fight like hell on the same issue three times a year and [the] Appropriations [Committee] still writes the final bill. A smart younger member will want to get on Appropriations, because that's where the real power is."

Another House Democrat, a member of the Appropriations Committee, complained that even with the Budget Act of 1974, the system is too disorganized, especially in coordinating House and Senate activity. "We're just marking time in a lot of our hearings," he said, "We're getting the information we need to deal with the Senate at the end of the session--and Senate Appropriations won't be done until the last two weeks of the year. Then we rush to get something out in the last two weeks, the way a football team does a two-minute drill at the end of a game. That's it, really. The budget process looks more like a sporting event than a policy process."

Opinions on the impact of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings were split, with a plurality saying it has not helped the process. Overall, 46.5 percent of members believed Gramm-Rudman-Hollings has not improved the process, 34.2 percent believed it has, 4.4 percent said the effect was mixed, and 11.4 percent said Gramm-Rudman-Hollings has had little effect. There were no significant chamber differences, but there were some slight party disagreements. Among Democrats, a slight 52.3 percent majority believed Gramm-Rudman-Hollings has weakened the budget process, 30.8 percent said it has improved the process, and 10.8 percent said it has had little effect. For Republicans, those who believed the process has worsened and those who believe it has improved tied at 38.8 percent, while 12.2 percent believe Gramm-Rudman-Hollings has had no effect.

Many of the respondents voiced the opinion that while the budget process itself has not improved, GRH was really designed to lower the budget deficit. According to one Democratic Senator, "[GRH] hasn't made a real difference in how we write a budget, it's just lowered some numbers. Gramm-Rudman-Hollings is a case of political courage vs. political expediency--and political expediency usually wins." Many other respondents felt that while GRH has had no impact on the process, its impact on the deficit has been beneficial. One Democratic Senator said, "I'm not sure about the impact of

Gramm-Rudman-Hollings on the process itself. I know it has had a positive impact on the budget by reducing deficits."

Another significant issue regarding the impact of budgeting on policy making is the relationship between the appropriations and authorizing committees. Though a certain level of competition has always existed between these committees, some believe the competition is rapidly become a source of tension that hinders budgeting and legislation. The survey found that this is the case. When members and staff were asked if they believed there was tension between the appropriations and authorizing committees, the answer was an overwhelming "yes." The proportion of respondents saying there was tension ranged from a "low" of 69.2 percent of committee staff to a high of 86 percent of members. Although there were no significant differences between chambers or parties, 29.6 percent of Senators attached an additional response to their answers--they said there was equally significant or even greater tension between the Appropriations Committee and Budget Committee within their chamber, and this hampered their work.

Although there was overwhelming agreement about the existence of tension between the committees, it was not unanimous that this was a problem. In fact, a few respondents thought this was the natural way for the budget to work. Said one House Republican Committee staff director, "Is there tension between [these committees]? There sure is and this problem has existed since about, oh, say 1830." Another Republican Representative was worried that there was not enough tension between these committees--"When the authorizing committees see what the appropriations committees are doing on policy, we should be raising holy hell." But most of the opinions by members were reflected by one House Democrat--"...the Budget Act...Gramm-Rudman-Hollings...[these] have really increased the tension between the appropriating and authorizing committees, [and this] has rendered the authorizing committees less important, less powerful, and largely unnecessary."

One House Republican gave a graphic example of how the conflict between the appropriating and authorizing committees affected him. "One reason I'm on [an exclusive committee]," he said, "is because I was sick to death of being on an authorizing committee whose power was being usurped by the appropriations [committees.]" This Republican sought a seat on more powerful committee. "This [appropriations-authorizing] situation really bugged the s--- out of me," he said, "so I let people know that if I didn't get assigned to [an exclusive] committee, I was going to leave."

What Has Been the Impact of the Budget Process on Your Committees' Ability to Make Policy? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Weakened	43.7%	66.7%	49.1%	52.2%	46.7%	50.8%	46.4%	24.0%	35.8%
Mixed	5.7	3.7	5.3	4.3	6.7	4.9	3.6	12.0	7.5
Strengthened	6.9	3.7	6.1	8.7	13.3	9.8	7.1	20.0	13.2
Little effect	29.9	14.8	26.3	23.9	13.3	21.3	32.2	36.0	34.0
Other	12.6	11.1	12.3	8.7	20.0	11.5	3.6	4.0	3.8
No opinion/Don't Know	1.2	-	0.9	2.2	-	1.7	7.1	4.0	5.7
n=	*87*	*27*	*114*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

What Has Been the Impact of the Budget Process on Your Committees' Ability to Make Policy? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Weakened	50.8%	46.9%	**49.1%**	54.1%	45.8%	**50.8%**	44.4%	26.9%	**35.8%**
Mixed	4.6	6.1	**5.3**	8.1	-	**4.9**	11.1	3.8	**7.5**
Strengthened	4.6	8.2	**6.1**	13.5	4.2	**9.8**	18.5	7.7	**13.2**
Little effect	26.2	26.5	**26.3**	13.5	33.3	**21.3**	22.2	46.2	**34.0**
Other	13.8	10.2	**12.3**	10.8	12.5	**11.5**	3.8	3.8	**3.8**
No opinion/Don't Know		2.1	**0.9**	-	4.2	**1.7**	-	11.6	**5.7**
n=	*65*	*49*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Has Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Improved, Worsened, or had No Impact on the Budget Process? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Worsened	46.0%	48.1	**46.5**	70.3%	45.8%	**60.7%**	46.4%	32.0%	**39.6%**
Mixed	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	2.7	-	**1.6**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Improved	33.3	37.0	**34.2**	16.2	45.8	**27.9**	32.1	44.0	**37.7**
Little effect	12.6	7.5	**11.4**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	10.7	20.0	**15.1**
No opinion/Don't Know	3.5	3.7	**3.5**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	7.2	-	**3.8**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

Has Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Improved, Worsened, or had No Impact on the Budget Process? (by Party)

	Members			**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Worsened	52.3%	38.8%	**46.5%**	70.3%	45.8%	**60.7%**	48.1%	30.8%	**39.6%**
Mixed	3.1	6.1	**4.4**	2.7	-	**1.6**	7.4	-	**3.8**
Improved	30.8	38.8	**34.2**	16.2	45.8	**27.9**	29.7	46.2	**37.7**
Little effect	10.8	12.2	**11.4**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	7.4	23.0	**15.1**
No opinion/Don't Know	3.0	4.1	**3.5**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	7.4	-	**3.8**
n =	*65*	*49*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Is There Tension Between the Appropriation Committee and the Authorizing Committees? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Yes	83.9%	92.6%	**86.0%**	71.7%	93.3%	**77.0%**	76.0%	68.0%	**69.3%**
No	16.1	16.1	**14.0**	17.4	6.7	**14.8**	32.0	28.0	**28.8**
No opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	10.9	-	**8.2**	-	4.0	**1.9**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*41*	*15*	***61***	*27*	*25*	***52***

Is There Tension Between the Appropriation Committee and the Authorizing Committees? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Yes	81.5%	91.8%	86.0%	75.7%	79.2%	77.0%	59.3%	80.0%	69.3%
No	18.5	8.2	14.0	18.9	8.3	14.8	40.7	16.0	28.8
No opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	5.4	12.5	8.2	-	4.0	1.9
n=	*65*	*49*	*114*	*37*	*24*	*61*	*27*	*25*	*52*

2.2 Responses to Specific Budgetary Reforms

The Center followed up its general questions on the budget with seven questions on specific budget reforms and found one proposal, "Appropriating funds on a two-year cycle," to be an overwhelming favorite. Overall, 85.8 percent of members, 76.9 percent of committee staff, and 65.6 percent of personal staff said they favored two-year appropriations. On this question, Republicans were far more likely to mark the "Strongly Agree" column, while Democrats were far more likely to answer "Somewhat Agree."

Those few members who objected to a two-year cycle questioned whether or not it would significantly change the system. "I'm not opposed to a two-year cycle," said a senior Democratic Representative, "but I do wonder if it would work. Frankly, I can see us having the same problems [completing the budget] we now have, only on a two-year basis, and not within one year like we now have."

But many who supported the two-year budget cycle felt that such a system was needed to improve congressional budgeting. One frequent response was that a two-year cycle was necessary to help improve the oversight process. Others believed the two-year cycle would improve the system by improving planning. A Republican Senate staff director who supports the two-year cycle said the current budget system "is based on authorizing committees finishing their work before the appropriators begin theirs, so you have a clearly defined set of policy goals before the budget is written. But these committees can never finish before the appropriators begin. No committee can make the necessary assessments between January and April; there isn't enough time to review the issues."

One of the survey's more startling findings was the attitude of Senators toward the Appropriations Committee. Some members and budget reformers have suggested that the conflicts between authorizing and appropriating committees can be resolved by abolishing the Appropriations Committee, and giving the power to write all appropriations bills to the authorizing committees. Only a third of Representatives favored this proposal, while 50 percent of the Senators surveyed would abolish their Appropriations Committee.

Many of the Senators' comments on this proposal reflected their belief that the Appropriations Committee is using the budget process to encroach on the policy decisions made by other committees. "[The system makes it] difficult for any authorizing committee to make policy," said a Republican Senator. "Right now I'm on a committee that has to meet without a budget resolution, so we don't have an actual budget. So we are marking up our bills at two levels...[Then] the Appropriations Committee keeps funding programs we never authorize." But the 50 percent who would not do away with the Appropriations Committee thought this move was unnecessary or too radical. Said one Republican Senator, "Certainly, something has to be done on the budget, but this approach is too extreme."

The 1984 House Task Force on the Budget Process proposed another approach to the budget--planning and designing a single ominibus appropriations bill instead of attempting to write 13 separate appropriations bills. But most members and staff do not favor this approach to budgeting. Negative responses to the idea ranged from a high of 78.7 percent of personal staff to a low of 56 percent for committee staff. Of members surveyed, only 28.8 percent favored the idea while 66.1 percent opposed it. Perhaps the most frequent comment on that question by members were references to the large budget bills that are frequently written at the end of a legislative session. "Single omnibus budget? We already do that, but by accident not design," said a House Republican who opposed the proposal.

The item veto, a system where a president can veto specific items in a bill without vetoing the entire bill, is prohibited under the Constitution. Funds for most projects and agencies are entered into a single larger appropriations bill so that if the president objects to some items in bill but not others, he must veto the entire bill to prevent the enactment of the particular items he opposes. But some members believe the president should have the power to veto specific items without rejecting the whole bill. Some supporters of this approach maintain that a line item veto is possible without changing the Constitution if every item in an appropriations bill is enacted as a separate piece of legislation.

Members are opposed to any item veto, though the responses to the Center's question on a line item veto reflected deep partisan divisions among respondents. Overall among members, 58 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the line item veto, while 42 percent agreed or strongly agreed with it. But among Republicans, 60.4 percent strongly agreed and 22.9 percent somewhat agreed with the line item veto, for a total of 83.3 percent. In contrast, 89 percent of Democrats opposed the line item veto.

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support?
(By Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Create a special committee to study the budget process and propose revisions									
Strongly agree	33.3%	32.0%	**33.0%**	19.6%	40.0%	**24.6%**	25.9%	16.0%	**21.2%**
Somewhat agree	39.2	36.0	**38.4**	47.8	26.7	**42.6**	29.6	24.0	**26.9**
No opinion	4.6	-	**3.6**	2.2	-	**1.6**	11.1	12.0	**11.5**
Somewhat disagree	12.6	20.0	**14.3**	15.2	13.3	**14.8**	18.5	28.0	**23.1**
Strongly disagree	10.3	12.0	**10.7**	15.2	20.0	**16.4**	14.9	20.0	**17.3**
n =	*87*	*26*	***112***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*27*	*25*	***52***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Create a special committee to study the budget process and propose revisions									
Strongly agree	31.3%	35.4%	**33.0%**	27.0%	20.8%	**24.6%**	23.1%	19.2%	**21.2%**
Somewhat agree	39.1	37.5	**38.4**	37.8	50.0	**42.6**	23.1	30.8	**26.9**
No opinion	6.2	-	**3.6**	-	4.2	**1.6**	23.1	-	**11.5**
Somewhat disagree	15.6	12.5	**14.3**	16.3	12.5	**14.8**	26.9	19.2	**23.1**
Strongly disagree	7.8	14.6	**10.7**	18.9	12.5	**16.4**	3.8	30.8	**17.3**
n =	*65*	*48*	***112***	*37*	24	***61***	*26*	*26*	***52***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Adopt a line-item veto system, allowing the President to veto appropriations for a specific item without vetoing the entire bill									
Strongly agree	27.9%	34.6%	**29.5%**	15.2%	13.3%	**14.8%**	14.8%	24.0%	**19.2%**
Somewhat agree	12.8	11.5	**12.5**	13.0	13.3	**13.1**	14.8	16.0	**15.4**
No opinion	-	-	**-**	2.2	-	**1.6**	3.7	4.0	**3.8**
Somewhat disagree	7.0	7.7	**7.1**	6.6	20.0	**9.8**	11.1	4.0	**7.8**
Strongly disagree	52.3	46.2	**50.9**	63.0	53.4	**60.7**	55.6	52.0	**53.8**
n=	*86*	*26*	***112***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*27*	*25*	***52***
Appropriate funds on a two year schedule									
Strongly agree	40.2	57.7	**44.2**	21.7	26.7	**23.0**	33.3	40.0	**36.5**
Somewhat agree	44.8	30.8	**41.6**	45.6	33.3	**42.6**	48.1	32.0	**40.4**
No opinion	3.5	-	**2.7**	6.5	6.7	**6.6**	-	16.0	**7.7**
Somewhat disagree	8.0	11.5	**8.8**	19.7	13.3	**18.0**	3.7	4.0	**3.8**
Strongly disagree	3.5	-	**2.7**	6.5	20.0	**9.8**	14.9	8.0	**11.6**
n=	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*27*	*25*	***52***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Adopt a line-item veto system, allowing the President to veto appropriations for a specific item without vetoing the entire bill									
Strongly agree	6.3%	60.4%	**29.5%**	0%	37.5%	**14.8%**	0%	38.5%	**19.2%**
Somewhat agree	4.7	22.9	**12.5**	-	33.3	**13.1**	11.6	19.2	**15.4**
No opinion	-	-	-	2.7	-	**1.6**	3.8	3.8	**3.8**
Somewhat disagree	9.3	4.2	**7.1**	8.1	12.5	**9.8**	3.8	11.6	**7.8**
Strongly disagree	79.7	12.5	**50.9**	89.2	16.7	**60.7**	80.8	26.9	**53.8**
n=	*64*	*48*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*26*	*26*	***52***
Appropriate funds on a two year schedule									
Strongly agree	26.6	67.3	**44.2**	16.2	33.3	**23.0**	19.2	53.8	**36.5**
Somewhat agree	53.1	26.5	**41.6**	43.2	41.7	**42.6**	53.8	26.9	**40.4**
No opinion	4.7	-	**2.7**	5.4	8.3	**6.6**	11.5	3.4	**7.7**
Somewhat disagree	14.0	2.0	**8.8**	27.1	4.2	**18.0**	-	7.7	**3.8**
Strongly disagree	1.6	4.2	**2.7**	8.1	12.5	**9.8**	15.5	7.7	**11.6**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*26*	*26*	***52***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Consider a single omnibus appropriations bill each year, rather than work on several separate appropriations bills									
Strongly agree	5.8%	7.7%	**6.3%**	0%	6.7%	**1.6%**	7.7%	8.4%	**8.0%**
Somewhat agree	23.3	11.5	**20.5**	13.0	33.3	**18.1**	23.1	16.7	**20.0**
No opinion	8.1	3.8	**7.1**	2.2	-	**1.6**	11.5	20.8	**16.0**
Somewhat disagree	23.3	30.8	**25.0**	34.8	40.0	**36.1**	26.9	33.3	**30.0**
Strongly disagree	39.5	46.2	**41.1**	50.0	20.0	**42.6**	30.8	20.8	**26.0**
n=	*86*	*26*	***112***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*26*	*24*	***50***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Consider a single omnibus appropriations bill each year rather than work on several separate appropriations bills									
Strongly agree	6.3%	6.1%	**6.3%**	2.7%	0%	**1.6%**	8.3%	7.7%	**8.0%**
Somewhat agree	20.7	20.4	**20.5**	16.2	20.8	**18.1**	16.7	23.1	**20.0**
No opinion	7.9	6.1	**7.1**	2.7	-	**1.6**	8.3	23.1	**16.0**
Somewhat disagree	28.6	20.4	**25.0**	43.2	25.0	**36.1**	41.7	19.2	**30.0**
Strongly disagree	36.5	47.0	**41.1**	35.1	54.2	**42.6**	25.0	26.9	**26.0**
n =	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*24*	*26*	***50***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support?
(by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Eliminate the appropriations committee and require authorizing committees to make appropriations									
Strongly agree	11.5%	11.5%	**11.5%**	2.2%	6.7%	**3.3%**	22.3%	8.3%	**15.7%**
Somewhat agree	20.8	38.5	**24.8**	19.6	26.7	**21.3**	11.1	16.7	**13.8**
No opinion	9.2	-	**7.0**	2.2	13.2	**4.9**	3.7	12.5	**7.8**
Somewhat disagree	18.4	19.2	**18.6**	30.4	26.7	**29.5**	14.8	20.8	**17.6**
Strongly disagree	40.2	30.8	**38.1**	45.6	26.7	**41.0**	48.1	41.7	**45.1**
n=	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*27*	*24*	***51***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Eliminate the appropriations committee and require authorizing committees to make appropriations									
Strongly agree	10.9%	12.2%	**11.5%**	2.7%	4.2%	**3.3%**	12.0%	19.2%	**15.7%**
Somewhat agree	25.0	24.5	**24.8**	21.6	20.8	**21.3**	12.0	15.4	**13.8**
No opinion	7.8	6.2	**7.1**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	4.0	11.5	**7.8**
Somewhat disagree	15.6	22.4	**18.6**	27.0	33.3	**29.5**	24.0	11.5	**17.6**
Strongly disagree	40.6	34.7	**38.1**	43.2	37.5	**41.0**	48.0	42.3	**45.1**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*25*	*26*	***51***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Eliminate the budget committee and give their power to write the budget resolutions to the appropriations committees									
Strongly agree	11.7%	15.4%	**12.5%**	2.3%	0%	**1.6%**	4.0%	12.5%	**8.2%**
Somewhat agree	26.7	23.1	**25.9**	15.2	33.4	**19.7**	28.0	16.7	**22.4**
No opinion	7.0	3.8	**6.2**	4.3	-	**3.3**	8.0	12.5	**10.2**
Somewhat disagree	27.9	34.6	**29.5**	39.1	33.3	**37.7**	32.0	25.0	**28.6**
Strongly disagree	26.7	23.1	**25.9**	39.1	33.3	**37.7**	28.0	33.3	**30.6**
n=	*86*	*26*	***112***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*25*	*24*	***49***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Eliminate the budget committee and give their power to write the budget resolutions to the appropriations committees									
Strongly agree	7.9%	18.4%	**12.5%**	0%	4.2%	**1.6%**	4.2%	12.0%	**8.2%**
Somewhat agree	23.8	28.6	**25.9**	16.3	25.0	**19.7**	20.8	24.0	**22.4**
No opinion	7.9	4.1	**6.2**	5.4	-	**3.3**	8.3	12.0	**10.2**
Somewhat disagree	34.9	22.4	**29.5**	45.9	25.0	**37.7**	37.5	20.0	**28.6**
Strongly disagree	25.5	26.5	**25.9**	32.4	45.8	**37.7**	29.2	32.0	**30.6**
n=	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*24*	*25*	***49***

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Party and Chamber)

House Only	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Restore the May 15th deadline for committees to report authorization bills.									
Strongly agree	20.8%	57.1%	**36.1%**	32.1%	61.1%	**43.5%**	23.1%	28.6%	**25.9%**
Somewhat agree	45.8	25.7	**37.3**	28.6	16.7	**23.9**	30.8	21.4	**25.9**
No opinion	14.6	8.6	**12.1**	21.4	5.5	**15.2**	15.3	21.4	**18.5**
Somewhat disagree	12.5	2.9	**8.4**	10.7	11.1	**10.9**	23.1		**11.2**
Strongly disagree	6.3	5.7	**6.1**	7.2	5.6	**6.5**	7.7	28.6	**18.5**
n=	*48*	*35*	*83*	*28*	*18*	*46*	*13*	*14*	*27*

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support?
(by Party and Chamber)

Senate Only	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Decrease the power of the Budget Committee to control how authorizing committees allocate program spending goals as set in the Budget Resolution									
Strongly agree	7.7%	15.4%	**11.6%**	12.5%	16.7%	**14.4%**	15.4%	33.3%	**24.0%**
Somewhat agree	38.5	30.8	**34.6**	12.5	-	**7.1**	46.2	33.3	**40.0**
No opinion	-	-	-	25.0	16.7	**21.4**	7.6	-	**4.0**
Somewhat disagree	46.1	23.0	**34.6**	37.5	33.3	**35.7**	15.4	8.4	**12.0**
Strongly disagree	7.7	30.8	**19.2**	12.5	33.3	**21.4**	15.4	25	**20.0**
n =	*13*	*93*	*26*	*8*	*6*	*14*	*13*	*12*	*25*

What Changes in the Budget Process Would You Support? (by Party and Chamber)

House Only	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Increase the power of the Budget Committee to control how authorizing committees allocate program spending goals as set in the Budget Resolution									
Strongly agree	8.0%	11.1%	**9.3%**	3.7%	0%	**2.2%**	0%	0%	**0%**
Somewhat agree	10.0	13.9	**11.6**	3.7	33.3	**15.6**	8.3	7.1	**7.7**
No opinion	2.0	8.3	**4.7**	7.4	11.2	**8.8**	-	14.3	**7.7**
Somewhat disagree	36.0	30.6	**33.7**	55.6	33.3	**46.7**	8.3	21.4	**15.4**
Strongly disagree	44.0	36.1	**40.7**	29.6	22.2	**26.7**	83.4	57.1	**69.2**
n =	*50*	*36*	***86***	*27*	*18*	***45***	*12*	*14*	***26***

Are there Any Other Budget Recommendations that You would like to Make? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Issues, not the process, are the problem	5.8%	25.9%	**10.6%**	8.7%	26.7%	**13.1**	3.7	4.0	**3.8**
Create a Capital Budget	8.1	3.7	**6.3**	-	-	-	3.7	-	**1.9**
Enforce the rules on budget deadlines	3.5	3.7	**4.7**	15.2	13.3	**14.8**	3.7	8.0	**5.8**
Change committee membership or jurisdictions	3.5	7.4	**3.1**	2.2	6.7	**3.3**	-	-	-
A Balanced Budget Amendment is needed	3.5	3.7	**3.1**	6.5	-	**4.9**	7.4	-	**3.8**
Repeal the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Act of 1974	-	7.4	**3.1**	2.2	-	**1.6**	7.4	4.0	**5.8**
Change the way recission authority is used	-	4.1	**1.8**	-	-	-	-	4.0	**1.9**
Other	20.9	7.4	**17.7**	17.4	13.3	**11.5**	3.7	16.0	**9.6**
n=	*86*	*27*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*25*	*27*	***52***

Are there Any Other Budget Recommendations that You would like to Make? (by Party)

Multiple Responses	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Issues, not the process, are the problem	14.1%	6.1%	**10.6%**	21.6%	0%	**13.1**	3.8	3.8	**3.8**
Create a Capital Budget	6.3	8.2	**6.3**	-	-	-	3.8	-	**1.9**
Enforce the rules on budget deadlines	4.7	2.0	**4.7**	16.2	12.5	**14.8**	-	7.7	**5.8**
Change committee membership or juridictions	3.1	6.1	**3.1**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	-	-	-
A Balanced Budget Amendment is needed	3.1	4.1	**3.1**	2.7	8.3	**4.9**	-	7.7	**3.8**
Repeal the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Act of 1974	3.1	4.1	**3.1**	2.7	-	**1.6**	-	11.5	**5.8**
Change the way recission authority is used	-	4.1	**1.8**	-	-	-	3.8	-	**1.9**
Other	15.6	20.4	**17.7**	21.6	8.3	**11.5**	7.7	11.5	**9.6**
n=	*64*	*49*	*113*	*37*	*24*	*61*	*26*	*26*	*52*

3

Using Time on Capitol Hill

The Center's first question--"What one or two things most surprised you about how Congress operates?"--was designed to get at what most concerned or interested the respondents. Some respondents had been on Capitol Hill for a long time and could not remember what had surprised them in the past. In that case, the interviewers modified the question to "What still surprises you about how Congress works?"

The leading answer among all respondents--members, personal and committee staff--was that "inefficiency" was the most surprising thing about Congress. Members gave this answer more often than any other group, with 44.7 percent mentioning this problem. Among staff, inefficiency was mentioned by 30.2 percent of committee staff and 24.5 percent of personal staff.

Many members described specific events to illustrate what they meant by inefficiency. "We are called the greatest deliberative body in the world," said a House Republican. "But on a multibillion-dollar defense authorization bill, you only see two or three people on the floor debating it, while everyone else is in another committee meeting. Then, when a vote is called, people just follow the party or committee line on a bill." Another House Republican said, "The most difficult part of this job is trying to be in three places at once: in committee, on the floor and on the telephone returning calls." A House Democrat summed up the feelings of many members with previous legislative experience by saying, "Being a state legislator just doesn't prepare you for how disorganized things are around here."

Most Senators echoed their House counterparts. "It is ponderous the way things are done here, and that accounts for the duplication in the system," said a Republican Senator. "If I were designing a legislature for the 20th century, I would design a unicameral one." "Time and money," said a Democratic Senator, "that's all there ever is around here. And every thing goes on the budget. When I first got here, they would have put you in jail for talking about a trillion-dollar budget." Another Democrat said, "The inability to schedule my time surprised me most. I went from a managerial position to a fraternity and it is a shock."

The second largest category was "other," a collection of very specific, individual answers, mentioned by 21.1 percent of members. The answers falling into the "other" category covered a wide range, from that of a Democratic member who was astonished at how time consuming House roll call votes were before electronic voting was introduced, to a Democratic Senator who did not think the Senate took its "advise and consent" role on presidential appointments seriously enough. "We could improve government policy making if we were more critical," he said. "Right now there is too much of the 'if the president wants someone, he should get it' attitude."

Other members spoke of their own opportunities. "I was most surprised by how wide open power is here [in Congress]," said a Republican Representative. "If you're willing to go through enough doors, you can get something done." A House Democrat said he was pleasantly surprised to find that "a junior member actually has some say in how things are done here."

The third most frequent answer among members was "partisanship," with 11.4 percent. This answer was given principally by House Republicans, dissatisfied with their position vis-a-vis the Democrats. Another 10.5 percent of members mentioned the quality or style of the congressional membership has a whole. The remaining answers were scattered among a number of categories.

What Most Surprised You About How Congress Operates ? (By Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	Senate	Total	Personal Staff House	Senate	Total	Committee Staff House	Senate	Total
Inefficiency	41.4%	55.6%	**44.7%**	26.1%	20.0%	**24.6%**	28.6%	32.0%	**30.2%**
Partisanship of Congress	12.6	7.4	**11.4**	2.2	13.3	**4.9**	-	4.0	**1.9**
The personality, quality, or style of members	13.8	-	**10.6**	17.4	-	**13.1**	28.6	24.0	**26.4**
The budget process	3.4	18.5	**7.0**	6.5	6.7	**6.6**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Legislative procedures	3.4	18.5	**7.0**	21.7	20.0	**21.3**	-	12.0	**5.7**
The openness and accessiblity of Congress	9.2	-	**7.0**	4.3	6.7	**4.9**	3.6	8.0	**5.7**
The time consumed or demands made by the workload	6.9	7.4	**7.0**	4.3	13.3	**6.6**	7.1	4.0	**5.7**
The nature or complexity of issues	6.9	3.7	**6.1**	2.2	-	**1.6**	7.1	4.0	**5.7**
The power of party leaders/chairmen	5.7	7.4	**6.1**	-	6.7	**1.6**	3.6	-	**1.9**
The operation, or importance of committees	6.9	-	**5.3**	2.2	-	**1.6**	3.8	7.1	**3.8**
"Congress had no surprises for me"	-	6.9	**5.3**	2.2	13.3	**4.9**	14.3	-	**7.5**
The time spend on fundraising/reelection	-	14.8	**3.5**	-	-	-	-	10.7	**5.7**
The role, character or influence of staff	2.3	3.7	**2.6**	13.0	26.7	**16.4**	-	4.0	**1.9**
Bicameralism	-	-	-	4.3	6.7	**4.9**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Lack of information prior to voting	-	-	-	15.2	-	**11.5**	14.3	4.0	**9.4**
Chaos or overcrowding of offices	-	-	-	13.0	-	**9.8**	-	-	-
Influence of interest groups	-	-	-	2.2	6.7	**3.3**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

What Most Surprised You About How Congress Operates ? (By Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Inefficiency	43.1%	46.9%	**44.7%**	18.9%	33.3%	**24.6%**	22.2%	38.5%	**30.2%**
Partisanship of Congress	3.1	22.4	**11.4**	2.7	8.3	**4.9**	-	3.8	**1.9**
The personality, ~~quality~~, or style of members	10.8	10.2	**10.6**	13.5	12.5	**13.1**	33.3	19.2	**26.4**
The budget process	7.7	6.1	**7.0**	5.4	8.3	**6.6**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
Legislative procedures	7.7	6.1	**7.0**	27.0	12.5	**21.3**	7.4	3.8	**5.7**
The openness and accessiblity of Congress	9.2	4.1	**7.0**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	11.1	-	**5.7**
The time consumed or demands made by the workload	10.8	2.0	**7.0**	8.1	4.2	**6.6**	7.4	3.8	**5.7**
The nature or complexity of issues	7.7	4.1	**6.1**	2.7	-	**1.6**	3.7	7.7	**5.7**
The power of party leaders/chairmen	4.6	8.2	**6.1**	2.7	-	**1.6**	-	3.7	**1.9**
The operation, or importance of committees	6.2	4.1	**5.3**	-	4.2	**1.6**	-	7.7	**3.8**
"Congress had no surprises for me"	6.2	4.1	**5.3**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	7.4	7.7	**7.5**
The time spend on fundraising/reelection	3.1	4.1	**3.5**	-	-	-	-	11.5	**5.7**
The role, character or influence of staff	3.1	2.0	**2.6**	21.6	8.3	**16.4**	3.7	-	**1.9**
Bicameralism	-	-	-	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	3.7	-	**1.9**
Lack of information prior to voting	-	-	-	10.8	12.5	**11.5**	7.4	11.5	**9.4**
Chaos or overcrowding of offices	-	-	-	8.1	12.5	**9.8**	-	-	-
Influence of interest groups	-	-	-	-	8.3	**3.3**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
n=	*49*	*65*	***114***	*24*	*37*	***61***	*26*	*27*	***53***

3.1 Legislative Scheduling

"What surprised me most about the Senate was the openness of its rules that create the freedom we have here. It is still impressive to me, but it is a dual-edged sword." --a Republican Senator

To understand the Center's questions on the legislative schedule, one must recognize the differences between the House and Senate procedures. The rules of the House ensure the will of a majority of members, while the Senate rules are designed to protect the minority, to the point where a single Senator can slow down or even stop a bill from passing. The Center's question on the schedule opened with three proposals that apply to both the House and the Senate. In addition, there were four additional questions asked only of Senators and Senate staff.

General Scheduling Proposals

Because members must divide their official time between their home states and Washington, D.C., Congress routinely adopts a three day work week for those periods when it is in session. Thus, Congress is often in session from Tuesday to Thursday, leaving Monday and Friday as travel days back to the district. But even with jet travel, it is difficult and time consuming for members to shuttle between their home states and Washington.

Some members have suggested shifting from the current three-day work week to a five-day work week, three weeks a month, with a recess period for the fourth week to give members more concentrated time back in their home states. Of the members, 64.6 percent supported such a calendar, 30.1 percent opposed it, and 5.3 percent had no opinion. Strong support for this idea was evident between chambers and parties--77 percent of Senators and 60.9 percent of Representatives either agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal. Between parties, 73.5 percent of Republicans and 57.9 percent of Democrats either agreed or strongly agreed with the calendar.

Some have suggested much of the support for this calendar comes from Western state members. However, when the Center analyzed support for the five-day work week by region there were no significant differences--members nationwide supported the idea. In late 1987, the Senate leadership announced it would try a three week in session/one week in recess schedule on an experimental basis in 1988.

Members did not strongly favor a proposal that would prohibit Monday and Friday votes without seven days' advance notice. Only 48.2 percent of members supported the proposal, with 45.5 percent opposing it and 6.3 percent undecided. Between chambers, a 54.7 percent majority of House members favored the week's notice of a vote, with 34.9 percent of House members saying that they "strongly agreed" with that idea. In the Senate, however, no one "strongly agreed" with the question, only 26.9 percent "somewhat agreed" with it, and 61.4 percent somewhat or strongly disagreed with the notification idea. Between parties, a majority of Republicans--56.3 percent--favored a week's notice on votes, while only 42.2 percent of Democrats did.

That 54.7 percent of House members did support more advance notice on votes was consistent with the biggest complaint Representatives had about the calendar: more certainty in the schedule is needed Many Representatives said outright that the schedule needed to be controlled, that "more certitude" could be added. "[Members] need to get control of their time," said one Republican. "These scheduling issues are not petty complaints--strong scheduling will improve our contact with constituents to improve our jobs."

A formal legislative agenda has been suggested as a way both to add more certainty to the calendar and to improve the congressional policy making function. In 1983, a report made by the Senate Study Group to the Senate Rules and Administration Committee recommended that Congress adopt such an agenda. The Study Group's proposal was a detailed plan of how such an agenda should work--"...[that] the Congress establish an agenda at the early part of each session and that such an agenda be announced publicly so that the people of the United States may know what the Congress plans to consider during the current Session. This agenda should be followed as closely as possible, but could be changed by a premium vote...The agenda should be prepared and proposed by the leaders of both Houses after consultation with the President...and officials of his Administration."

There was significant support among members for the legislative agenda. The proposal won support from 57.5 percent of members overall, with only 36.3 percent of members opposing it and 6.2 percent having no opinion. Republican support was stronger, with 64.3 percent in favor as opposed to 53.1 percent of Democrats. Between chambers, the House favored the agenda idea with 59.7 percent of the vote, while Senators split, 50 percent agreed with the plan and 42.3 percent opposed it.

Some members had agreed with the plan in spirit but were concerned that it would not work. One Democratic Representative thought the plan was fine in theory, "but towards the end of the year I could see [an obstructionist] legislator using the 'points of order' to grind the House to a halt. That would do more harm than good." Others believed such an agenda would have to recognize the realities of legislative life, providing for an escape clause. "I'm all in favor of better planning here," said a House Democrat. "But last year, my committees had to deal with an exploded Challenger space shuttle and a revolution in the Philippines. No schedule can plan for that, and we shouldn't lock ourselves in to a schedule so tightly it prevents us from acting quickly on the unexpected."

Supporters of the idea believed a legislative agenda could be a strong organizational tool. "There is no pressure to sign off on anything. We can delay issues or bring them up again constantly in the same session," said one House Republican. "We need a 'court of last resort' to force us to make a decision by a certain time and to move on to the next issue." A House Democrat thought the agenda would be useful to bring the leadership and committees together at the beginning of the session "to get us started a little earlier."

In contrast to the members, committee staff were opposed to the legislative agenda plan, while personal staff were ambivalent. Only 47.5 percent of personal staff supported an agenda plan, 47 percent opposed it, and 4.9 percent had no opinion. Overall, 66 percent of committee staff opposed the legislative agenda.

What Changes in the Legislative Calendar Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Schedule a full week's recess once a month while requiring Congress to be in session five days a week for the remaining three weeks a month.									
Strongly agree	37.9%	46.1%	**39.8%**	19.6%	26.7%	**21.3%**	25.0%	8.0%	**17.0%**
Somewhat agree	23.0	30.8	**24.8**	23.9	40.0	**27.9**	39.3	32.0	**35.8**
No opinion	5.8	3.9	**5.3**	4.3	-	**3.3**	7.1	16.0	**11.4**
Somewhat disagree	17.2	11.5	**15.9**	34.8	20.0	**31.1**	17.9	36.0	**26.4**
Strongly disagree	16.1	7.7	**14.2**	17.4	13.3	**16.4**	10.7	8.0	**9.4**
n =	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***
Require the House and Senate leadership to develop jointly a formal list and timetable of key legislative priorities in the coming year and make departures from the timetable subject to points of order on the floor.									
Strongly agree	31.0	15.4	**27.4**	10.9	6.7	**9.8**	7.2	-	**3.8**
Somewhat agree	28.7	34.6	**30.1**	39.1	33.3	**37.7**	25.0	36.0	**30.2**
No opinion	5.8	7.7	**6.2**	4.3	6.7	**4.9**	-	-	**-**
Somewhat disagree	18.4	34.6	**22.1**	26.1	20.0	**24.6**	32.1	40.0	**35.8**
Strongly disagree	16.1	7.7	**14.2**	19.6	33.3	**23.0**	35.7	24.0	**30.2**
n =	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

What Changes in the Legislative Calendar Would You Support? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Schedule a full week's recess once a month while requiring Congress to be in session five days a week for the remaining three weeks a month.									
Strongly agree	31.3%	51.0%	**39.8%**	21.6%	20.8%	**21.3%**	18.5%	15.4%	**17.0%**
Somewhat agree	26.6	22.4	**24.8**	24.3	33.3	**27.9**	37.0	34.6	**35.8**
No opinion	6.2	4.1	**5.3**	2.8	4.2	**3.3**	14.9	7.7	**11.4**
Somewhat disagree	18.8	12.2	**15.9**	40.5	16.7	**31.1**	25.9	26.9	**26.4**
Strongly disagree	17.1	10.3	**14.2**	10.8	25.0	**16.4**	3.7	15.4	**9.4**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***
Require the House and Senate leadership to develop jointly a formal list and timetable of key legislative priorities in the coming year and make departures from the timetable subject to points of order on the floor.									
Strongly agree	25.0	30.6	**27.4**	5.5	16.7	**9.8**	-	7.7	**3.8**
Somewhat agree	28.1	32.6	**30.1**	40.5	33.3	**37.7**	29.7	30.8	**30.2**
No opinion	3.1	10.2	**6.2**	2.7	8.3	**4.9**	-	-	**-**
Somewhat disagree	25.0	18.4	**22.1**	29.7	16.7	**24.6**	33.3	38.5	**35.8**
Strongly disagree	18.8	8.2	**14.2**	21.6	25.0	**23.0**	37.0	23.0	**30.2**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

What Changes in the Legislative Calendar Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Restrict the ability of the leadership to schedule Monday or Friday votes without seven days advance notification.									
Strongly agree	34.9%	0%	**26.8%**	21.7%	13.3%	**19.7%**	14.3%	8.0%	**11.3%**
Somewhat agree	19.7	26.9	**21.4**	30.4	20.1	**27.9**	21.4	20.0	**20.8**
No opinion	4.7	11.6	**6.3**	15.3	13.3	**14.7**	14.3	4.0	**9.4**
Somewhat disagree	19.7	46.1	**25.9**	17.4	40.0	**23.0**	21.4	44.0	**32.1**
Strongly disagree	21.0	15.4	**19.6**	15.2	13.3	**14.7**	28.6	24.0	**26.4**
n=	*86*	*26*	*112*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

What Changes in the Legislative Calendar Would You Support?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Restrict the ability of the leadership to schedule Monday or Friday votes without seven days advance notification.									
Strongly agree	20.3%	35.4%	**26.8%**	21.6%	16.7%	**19.7%**	7.4%	15.4%	**11.3%**
Somewhat agree	21.9	20.8	**21.4**	27.0	29.2	**27.9**	18.5	23.1	**20.8**
No opinion	4.7	8.4	**6.3**	16.1	12.4	**14.7**	7.5	11.5	**9.4**
Somewhat disagree	28.1	22.9	**25.9**	21.6	25.0	**23.0**	33.3	30.8	**32.1**
Strongly disagree	25.0	12.5	**19.6**	13.5	16.7	**14.7**	33.3	19.2	**26.4**
n =	*64*	*48*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Are There Any Other Scheduling Recommendations That You Would Like to Make? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
More advance notice of votes or events	35.6%	25.9%	**33.3%**	26.1%	26.7%	**26.2%**	17.9%	16.0%	**17.0%**
Congress needs a more efficient schedule	27.6	29.6	**28.1**	15.2	6.7	**13.1**	3.6	8.0	**5.7**
Congress needs stronger leadership	29.6	8.0	**13.2**	6.7	13.2	**6.6**	7.1	12.0	**9.4**
More coordination and consultation is needed among parties, committees and/or chambers	9.2	14.8	**13.2**	13.0	-	**1.6**	7.1	8.0	**11.3**
Things are working fine now	9.2	12.2	**10.5**	13.5	4.2	**9.8**	7.4	7.7	**7.5**
Eliminate time wasting procedures	2.3	18.5	**6.1**	6.5	33.3	**13.1**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Return to citizen legislature/members should not stay in Washington all year	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	4.3	6.7	**4.9**	7.1	8.0	**7.5**
Congress should be in session 4 or 5 days each week	5.7	-	**4.4**	-	-	**-**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Recess on Fridays, but not Mondays	3.4	-	**2.6**	8.7	-	**3.8**	3.6	-	**1.9**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

Are There Any Other Scheduling Recommendations That You Would Like to Make? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
More advance notice of votes or events	32.3%	34.7%	**33.3%**	37.8	8.3	**26.2**	11.1	23.1	**17.0**
Congress needs a more efficient schedule	15.4	44.9	**28.1**	16.2	8.3	**13.1**	7.4	3.8	**5.7**
Congress needs stronger leadership	13.8	12.2	**13.2**	5.4	8.3	**6.6**	3.7	15.4	**9.4**
More coordination and consultation is needed among parties, committees and/or chambers	7.7	20.4	**13.2**	-	4.2	**1.6**	14.8	7.7	**11.3**
Things are working fine now	9.2	12.2	**10.5**	13.5	4.2	**9.8**	7.4	7.7	**7.5**
Eliminate time wasting procedures	6.1	6.1	**6.1**	13.5	12.5	**13.1**	7.4	-	**3.8**
Return to citizen legislature/members should not stay in Washington all year	1.5	8.2	**4.4**	2.7	8.3	**4.9**	3.7	11.5	**7.5**
Congress should be in session 4 or 5 days each week	7.7	-	**4.4**	-	-	-	3.7	-	**1.9**
Recess on Fridays, but not Mondays	4.6	-	**2.6**	2.7	12.5	**3.8**	-	3.8	**1.9**
n=	*65*	*49*	*114*	*37*	*24*	*61*	*27*	*26*	*53*

3.2 Senate Floor Procedures

Senators were asked if they would favor rules making it easier to limit debate on matters that have already been considered before during the session. Overall, 46.2 percent of the Senators interviewed said they would strongly agree with such a proposal and 34.6 percent somewhat agreed, for a total of 88 percent of Senators favoring these debate limits. Only 11.5 percent said they opposed such methods.

A filibuster is any legislative tactic used to purposely delay action on a bill or nomination. Frequently, though not always, the easiest way to filibuster a bill is to take advantage of the Senate's tradition of unlimited debate to make a marathon speech. When asked if they would favor rules restricting filibusters on a motion to proceed to consideration of a bill, Senators were strongly in favor of the proposal, with 50 percent strongly agreeing and 26.9 percent saying they somewhat agreed, for a total of 76.9 percent favoring stricter rules. Only 22.5 percent disagreed or strongly agreed.

In the House, amendments to a bill under consideration and debate on the bill must be germane. But in the Senate, requiring a topic to be germane applies only in a few specific cases, such as debate on an appropriations bill. Raising a non-germane amendment to a pending bill is a tactic often used by Senators to bypass routine legislative procedures to bring an issue to the floor. Supporters of non-germane amendments claim it is one way to make sure certain issues are raised and discussed in the Senate. But critics of non-germane amendments argue the tactic can delay proceedings on other important matters. Some have suggested proposals allowing the Senate to require more germaneness during the debate.

Tighter germaneness rules were supported by 61.5 percent of the Senate respondents; 26.9 percent opposed them. On this issue, support among Democrats was a little higher than among Republicans, with 69.2 percent of Democrats and 53.9 percent of Republicans either agreeing or strongly agreeing with tougher germaneness rules. Committee staff, however, overwhelmingly favored stricter rules on germaneness, as exactly 40 percent strongly agreed and another 40 percent somewhat agreed with the question.

A hold is an informal tradition in the Senate that allows any Senator or group of Senators to ask the party leaders to delay a vote on a bill, treaty, or appointment. When asked about curtailing or eliminating holds, 74.1 percent of Senators either agreed or strongly agreed. But while a majority of Senators from both parties agreed with the question, the party differences were somewhat more pronounced. A overwhelming 92.3 percent of Democrats supported restricting or eliminating holds, while only 7.7 percent disagreed. Among Republicans, 57.2 percent supported restricting holds and 42.8 percent opposed them.

What Changes in the Legislative Calender Would You Support? (by Party and Chamber)

Senate Only	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Make it easier to limit debate on issues which have already been considered at least once before in the session.									
Strongly agree	46.1%	46.1%	**46.1%**	55.6%	16.7%	**40.0%**	30.7%	16.7%	**24.0%**
Somewhat agree	38.5	30.8	**34.6**	22.2	33.3	**26.7**	15.4	25.0	**20.0**
No opinion	7.7	7.7	**7.7**	-	-	-	15.4	8.3	**12.0**
Somewhat disagree	7.7	7.7	**7.7**	22.2	16.7	**20.0**	23.1	-	**12.0**
Strongly disagree	-	7.7	**3.9**	-	33.3	**13.3**	15.4	50.0	**32.0**
n=	*13*	*13*	*26*	*9*	*6*	*15*	*13*	*12*	*25*
Limit the ability of a Senator to filibuster the motion to proceed to consideration of a bill.									
Strongly agree	53.8	46.1	**50.0**	55.6	33.3	**46.7**	38.5	50.0	**44.0**
Somewhat agree	30.8	23.1	**26.9**	33.3	33.3	**33.3**	23.1	-	**12.0**
No opinion	-	-	-	-	-	-	15.3	8.3	**12.0**
Somewhat disagree	15.4	7.7	**11.5**	11.1	16.7	**13.3**	7.7	8.3	**8.0**
Strongly disagree	-	23.1	**11.5**	-	16.8	**6.7**	15.4	33.4	**24.0**
n=	*13*	*13*	*26*	*9*	*6*	*15*	*13*	*12*	*25*

What Changes in the Legislative Calender Would You Support? (by Party and Chamber)

Senate Only	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Adopt procedures by which the Senate could decide all future floor amendments to a pending bill must be germane.									
Strongly agree	38.5%	38.5%	**38.5%**	44.4%	16.7%	**33.3%**	38.5%	41.7%	**40.0%**
Somewhat agree	30.8	15.4	**23.1**	22.2	16.7	**20.0**	46.1	33.3	**40.0**
No opinion	7.7	15.4	**11.5**	-	-	-	-	8.3	**4.0**
Somewhat disagree	15.3	7.7	**11.5**	22.2	16.6	**20.0**	7.7	-	**4.0**
Strongly disagree	7.7	23.0	**15.4**	11.2	50.0	**26.7**	7.7	16.7	**12.0**
n=	*13*	*13*	*26*	*9*	*6*	*15*	*13*	*12*	*25*
Eliminate or curtail the use of "holds" to block or delay floor action or legislation or nominations.									
Strongly agree	53.0	50.0	**51.9**	50.0	33.3	**40.0**	16.7	25.0	**20.8**
Somewhat agree	38.4	7.2	**22.2**	-	33.3	**20.0**	41.7	41.7	**41.8**
No opinion	-	-	-	-	22.2	**13.3**	8.3	8.3	**8.3**
Somewhat disagree	7.6	21.4	**14.8**	33.3	11.2	**20.0**	33.3	8.3	**20.8**
Strongly disagree	-	21.4	**11.1**	16.7	-	**6.7**	-	16.7	**8.3**
n=	*13*	*14*	*27*	*6*	*9*	*15*	*12*	*12*	*24*

3.3 Personal Time of Members

"Though I was well known in my state, I began my congressional career fairly late. I did that because I wanted to wait a few more years until my children were grown, so I could spend more time with them. But I'm not going to con you and say I sacrificed my career for the children. I really did it for me--I had the time of my life watching them grow up." --a Republican Senator

"Excuse me, Congressman, is that a baby basket on your desk?"

"Yes it is. You see, I'm a recent father but my wife has to work, so I keep the kid with me two afternoons a week." --Exchange between a Center interviewer and a Democratic Representative.

Concern over the "quality of life" on Capitol Hill is a relatively recent development, having its roots in the demands of legislative work and the changing family status of members. Although statistics show that the number of days and hours in session has risen only slightly from 1947, many other aspects of congressional life have changed. Changes in transportation technology and the needs of constituents have made it necessary for members to visit their home states almost every week instead of a few times a year. Many of today's members of Congress are parents of young children, while more congressional spouses are seeking employment outside the home. All of these factors make it difficult to balance legislative duties, visits to the district, and family time.

The Center's interviewers found that the question, "How do the demands of being a member of Congress affect your personal time?" stimulated many answers mixing anger and regret. Almost 80 percent of members said legislative work left them little time for family or personal matters, while fewer than 15 percent said their work had little effect on their personal lives. Most were not happy with the notion that being a member of Congress means you have to sacrifice family life.

One House Republican argued that the schedule needed to be arranged so members could have more family time to be "complete" individuals. "Everyone accepts the idea that to be a good Representative you have to get out of Washington to visit the district and find out what people back home are thinking," he said. "Well, if you get the time to raise a family, you also become a more 'complete' member, you will have a greater sympathy and understanding for other constituents' problems." In one case, a Center interviewer saw a graphic example of the conflicts between work and family. A House Democrat had told an interviewer that "Congress certainly doesn't leave you much time for personal matters and I have regrets about this...I almost never get to spend a whole weekend with my family." At that point, the member's appointment secretary walked in to say she was able to schedule a Saturday meeting with an official--which meant the Representative could not return home Friday night to be with his family. The member turned to the interviewer and said. "See what I mean?"

Some of those interviewed spoke about how having little family time affected other members. "It has been hard on me," said a Democratic Senator, "...[but] this is a particular problem up here if you are not ready for it. I know of two divorces now under way [among my colleagues] and I think [the time issue] has been a factor in both." Still other members tied the personal situation to salary problems and the difficulty of maintaining two households. A House Republican said "Most broken marriages I know of involve members who left the family back in the district." This member went on to say he believed the situation would get worse because "younger members with a mortgage back home can't come in and bring a family to a new home in Washington."

Some members were quite candid about their own personal lives. Two Republican Senators thought the system hurt families, but because they were "workaholics," they did not think it had much effect on them personally. "Since this is off the record," said one Senator "let me say that while I continue to publicly say the [Senate schedule] has adversely affected my family life, I strongly suspect I am a compulsive worker. Certainly, the system hasn't had a good effect on my personal life, but I won't blame the system for my own situation. But it is still the system that is at fault in most cases. It is insane right now and it need not be that way." Other Senators were adamant on this point. "The system just plain stinks," said a senior Republican. A Democratic Senator said, "Personal time? I have no personal time--weekdays I'm usually in this office by 5 A.M., and during the heavy legislative periods it is not unusual for me to leave at midnight. With a day like that, you can't schedule any personal time. We have to better organize the schedule to give us more personal time, especially when the session is lighter."

Representatives were not as angry about the situation as their Senate counterparts, but most were concerned about the lack of time. "It is a problem for younger members with families," said one Democrat, "and the leadership is more sensitive to the problem these days. But being more sensitive hasn't improved the situation." A Republican said, "I don't know that this is any different from any other high powered profession. But if you are weak you won't make it and that is why there are so many divorces and so much alcoholism up here. I'm still married and with my family, but I have to work at it."

Among members, 15 percent acknowledged there was a problem, but that "the situation gets better with time." A Democratic Senator said, "as you gain influence, time demands become greater...but the longer you are here, the better you get at saying 'no' to some of these events." A Republican Representative said that first "if you are not careful, you wind up working seven days a week." But as you gain experience, you learn how to better arrange your time--"I now have my D.C. and district offices better coordinate their time, because before they were not working together well, and there were too many demands made... But [if I get a free weekend] I still usually have quite a bit of office material to read before the next vote."

Personal staff also occasionally spoke of this problem. One administrative assistant told a Center interviewer, "I remember how one Representative asked another Representative's son what he wished to be when he grew up. When the boy said a pilot or a fireman, the Congressman asked why he didn't want to be a Congressman like his dad. The boy said you can't be a Congressman and a daddy."

How Do The Demands Of Being A Member Of Congress Affect Your Personal Time? (by Party and Chamber)

Members Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Member has no personal time after work	47.7%	40.8%	47.1%	37.0%	**44.7%**
Member has no time for family	24.6	42.9	32.2	33.3	**32.5**
Member feels job has had no effect on personal time	16.9	12.2	16.1	11.1	**14.9**
Member believes ability to balance career and family improves over time	10.8	4.1	5.7	14.8	**7.9**
Member says it is difficult both to work and study issues	1.5	-	1.1	-	**0.9**
Member has no time for personal friends	7.7	-	3.4	7.4	**4.4**
Member believes uncertainty of the schedule is the problem, not the total time available	3.1	14.3	5.7	14.8	**7.9**
Other	1.5	6.1	4.6	-	**3.5**
n=	*65*	*49*	*87*	*27*	***114***

3.4 *How Members Spend Their Work Day*

Members have many separate duties--as legislators on national policy, as the representatives and ombudsmen of citizens, and as overseers of government operations. How members spend their work day and how they would change it if they could, provides us with some insights into the variety of demands placed on them and how they resolve the conflicts between those demands. To determine how members would most like to use their time, the Center had each member respondent complete a card asking how much time they spend on seven typical activities--attending hearings, meeting with individuals and groups on legislation, watching or participating in the floor debate, studying or discussing legislation with other members or staff, fundraising for campaigns, doing casework for constituents, and working back home in the state and district.

Once the members completed this card, they were asked to complete a second identical card, asking how they would they most *like* to spend their time. By comparing the responses, the Center could determine if members felt they were spending too much time on some activities or not enough on others. The most significant results were that a large number of members would change the way they developed legislation. An equally large number of members would like to reduce the time they spend raising campaign funds.

Among the Center's most significant findings were that about half the members would like to spend more time discussing legislation with their colleagues or with staff, less time discussing legislation with outside interest groups, and less time raising money for political campaigns. In most cases, Senators felt more strongly than Representatives about how they would alter their work day.

For members, 47.7 percent wanted to spend more time discussing or developing legislation with other members or with staff, 48.6 percent would not change the amount of time they now spend on this activity, and 3.8 percent wanted to spend less time discussing legislation with members or staff. Senators were more likely to be dissatisfied, as 61.5 percent said they wanted to devote more time to this activity, compared to 43.5 percent of Representatives.

Yet, members would like to spend less time meeting with Washington representatives of interest groups or other individuals to discuss policy. A little over 50 percent of the members gave this answer, but, again, Senators were far more likely to complain. For Senators, 69.2 percent said they wanted to spend less time with interest groups, while no Senator wanted to spend more time with them. Among Representatives, 47.1 percent saw no need for change, 44.7 percent wanted to spend less time in such meetings and 8.2 percent wanted to spend more.

On campaign finance, 45 percent of members wanted to spend less time raising money, another 45 percent saw no need for change, and 10 percent wanted to spend more time on fundraising. The differences between chambers on this issue was not as large, with 53.8 percent of Senators wanting to spend less time raising money, compared to 42.4 percent of Representatives. But there were significant party differences, with 50 percent of Democrats wanting to spend less time raising money, as opposed to 38.8 percent of Republicans.

Overall, 60.4 percent of the members would not change how much time they spend on floor debate. However, Senators were more split on this issue, with 46.1 percent saying they would make no changes, 38.5 percent saying they want to spend more time on the floor and 15.4 percent wanting to spend less. More than 64 percent of Representatives would make no changes, 28.2 percent would like to spend more time on the floor participating in the debate, and 7.1 percent said they prefer spending less time on floor debate.

On casework, many members indicated they have their staffs do most of it; consequently, 55 percent of members said they would make no change in the amount of time they spend on this activity. But there were strong party differences on this question, with a plurality of Democrats--46.8 percent--saying they would like to do more and 41.9 percent saying they would make no changes. In contrast, 71.4 percent of Republicans would make no changes, while only 16.4 percent said they wanted to spend more time on casework.

The other two categories yielded few surprises. A little over two thirds of members would make no changes in the amount of time they spend in committee. Another 57.4 percent said they would not change the amount of time they spend working in their home states or districts, 27.9 percent wanted to spend some more time back home, and only 14.4 percent said they would like to spend less time there.

How Would You Change the Time You Spend on these Legislative Activities? (By Chamber)

Members Only	Significantly Less Time		Less Time		Slightly Less Time		No Change		Slightly More Time		More Time	
	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate	House	Senate
Attending committee hearings, markups and other committee meetings	-	-	3.2%	2.0%	24.2%	20.5%	61.3%	73.5%	11.3%	2.0%	-	2.0%
Meeting on legislative issues with constituents, government officials, interest groups and lobbyists in Washington	1.6	-	9.7	12.2	38.7	38.8	41.9	44.9	6.5	4.1	1.6	-
Attending the floor debate or watching the debate on television	-	-	1.6	-	8.1	8.2	62.1	57.1	20.9	26.5	6.5	8.2
Studying pending legislation or talking about legislation with other members or staff	-	-	-	-	4.9	2.0	43.5	55.1	43.5	32.7	8.1	10.2
Fundraising for the next campaign, for other campaigns or the party	8.1	-	9.7	14.3	32.3	24.5	40.3	51.0	8.1	10.2	1.5	-
Doing non-legislative work for constituents in Washington	1.6	-	11.3	6.1	33.9	10.2	41.9	71.4	8.1	12.3	3.2	-
Work back in the state	-	-	1.6	8.2	24.2	22.4	65.5	49.0	9.7	20.4	-	-
n=	86	26	86	26	86	26	86	26	86	26	86	26

How Would You Change the Time You Spend on these Legislative Activities? (by Party)

Members Only	Significantly Less Time		Less Time		Slightly Less Time		No Change		Slightly More Time		More Time	
	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.	Dem.	Rep.
Attending committee hearings, markups and other committee meetings	-	-	2.4%	3.8%	23.5%	19.2%	61.3%	73.5%	11.3%	2.0%	-	2.0%
Meeting on legislative issues with constituents, government officials, interest groups and lobbyists in Washington	1.1	-	8.3	19.2	38.7	35.3	50.0	44.9	6.5	4.1	1.6	-
Attending the floor debate or watching the debate on television	-	-	1.1	-	8.1	5.9	15.4	57.1	20.9	26.5	6.5	8.2
Studying pending legislation or talking about legislation with other members or staff	-	-	-	-	4.9	3.6	3.8	55.1	43.5	32.7	8.1	10.2
Fundraising for your next campaign, for other campaigns or the party	4.7	3.8	8.2	23.2	32.3	29.5	26.9	51.0	8.1	10.2	1.5	-
Doing non-legislative work for your constituents in Washington	1.1	-	8.2	11.5	33.9	10.2	41.9	71.4	8.1	12.3	3.2	-
Work back in the state	-	-	4.7	3.8	24.2	22.4	65.5	49.0	9.7	20.4	-	-
n=	63	49	63	49	63	49	63	49	63	49	63	49

3.5 What Should the Leadership Be Doing?

"The problem here isn't leadership but followership. Everyone wants power here and no one wants to be led. But I don't know how you solve this--no voter is going to support a candidate that says 'elect me, I"m a follower.'" --a House Democrat

The Center asked two questions on congressional leadership, "What should your leadership be doing--or be doing better--than they are now?" and "Is there anything you think the leadership is now doing that they should not do?" In general, members and staff indicated support for the leadership, though some House Democrats, referring to the recent election of Jim Wright (D-TX) as Speaker, did say it was "too early to tell." There were very few suggestions in response to the second question, on what the leadership should not be doing.

Most respondents had few critical comments about their leadership, others had specific suggestions or complaints. Often, a respondent would say the leadership was doing fine, then go on to make a particular suggestion. Among members, the two most frequent suggestions, mentioned by 21.9 percent each, were first that the leadership should give more advance notice of the schedule and, second, that the leadership exercise more discipline over members.

Between chambers, more advance notice on votes and legislative activity ranked first among Senators, mentioned by 37 percent of all Senators. Among Representatives, more advance notice on legislative activity placed third overall, mentioned by 17.2 percent of House respondents. That the leadership should exercise more discipline among members ranked first in the House, mentioned by 23 percent of Representatives. In the Senate, 18.5 percent mentioned discipline, it tied for second with three other items.

Regarding more advance notice, members said frequent changes in the schedule lead to resentment of the leadership. A Democratic Representative complained, "What is really frustrating is when the leadership tells you their position is set in stone on Monday and then it is completely turned around on Thursday." One Democratic Senator was very blunt: "[Majority Leader Robert] Byrd doesn't know anything but constant hard work, morning, noon and night--and there is nothing wrong with this except he expects the rest of us to work the same way he does. The problem is, most of us aren't built to work the way he expects. [He] needs to provide us with a definite schedule during heavy periods. When the schedule is lighter, it should be arranged to give us more time for district and personal activities."

"Discipline" meant different things to the members. For most Senators and House Democrats, "discipline" meant enforcing rules and conduct to allow legislative work to proceed in an orderly fashion. But for the 26.5 percent of House Republicans who mentioned this as a problem, discussion of party discipline often reflected a struggle within their ranks. Several younger Republicans believe their party leadership has been too accommodating to the ranking members of committees, especially those who cut deals with the Democratic members on committees. Hence, some Republicans suggested rules to give the party primacy over the committee leadership. "I would like a rule," said one Republican Representative, "that said if a ranking member could not support the Republican Conference's position on a bill over the committee position, that ranking member should step down from a leadership position on a bill."

Another frequent answer was that the leadership should "devote more time to the legislative agenda." Many members who gave this answer thought their leaders could better articulate their party's policy agenda to the public. This was a particular concern among Senate Democrats. One Senator suggested a new Democratic Senate party post, a kind of "designated spokesman" who could effectively present the party point of view to television and the press. A few House Republicans had similar concerns. "We will always be the minority party [in the House]," said one, "unless we can present ourselves as a real alternative to the Democrats."

What Should Your Party Leadership be Doing--or Doing Better--Than They are Now? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
More advance scheduling of legislative activity	17.2%	37.0%	**21.9%**	20.0%	17.4%	**18.0%**	3.6%	16.0%	**9.4%**
Stronger discipline of members	23.0	18.5	**21.9**	30.4	33.3	**31.1**	14.3	8.0	**11.3**
Should pay more attention to party or congressional agenda	19.5	18.5	**19.3**	23.9	20.0	**23.0**	17.9	24.0	**20.8**
Leadership needs to improve its ability to coordinate or communicate issues	16.1	11.1	**14.9**	13.0	20.0	**14.8**	21.4	12.0	**17.0**
Leadership needs to be more responsive to members	10.3	18.5	**12.3**	15.1	6.7	**13.1**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Respondent mentioned specific legislative proceedure	2.3	11.1	**4.4**	4.3	6.7	**4.9**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Respondent mentioned leadership role on a specific policy issue	3.4	3.7	**3.5**	8.7	6.7	**8.2**	4.0	-	**1.9**
Leadership needs to better manage its resources	4.6	-	**3.5**	-	6.7	**1.6**	-	-	-
Other	6.9	14.8	**8.8**	4.3	6.7	**4.9**	-	12.0	**5.7**
n =	*87*	*27*	*114*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*25*	*28*	*53*

What Should Your Party Leadership be Doing--or Doing Better--Than They are Now? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	**Members**			**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
More advance scheduling of legislative activity	32.3%	8.2%	**21.9%**	21.6%	12.5%	**18.0%**	7.4%	11.5%	**9.4%**
Stronger discipline of members	18.5	26.5	**21.9**	27.0	37.5	**31.1**	11.1	11.5	**11.3**
Should pay more attention to party or congressional agenda	20.0	18.4	**19.3**	32.4	8.3	**23.0**	29.6	11.5	**20.8**
Leadership needs to improve its ability to coordinate or communicate issues	13.8	16.3	**14.9**	18.9	8.3	**14.8**	11.1	23.1	**17.0**
Leadership needs to be more responsive to members	10.8	14.3	**12.3**	16.2	8.3	**13.1**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Respondent mentioned specific legislative proceedure	7.7	-	**4.4**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	3.7	-	**1.9**
Respondent mentioned leadership role on a specific policy issue	7.7	-	**3.5**	5.4	4.2	**8.2**	3.7	-	**1.9**
Leadership needs to better manage its resources	3.1	4.1	**3.5**	13.5	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
Other	7.7	10.2	**8.8**	2.7	8.3	**4.9**	7.4	3.8	**5.7**
n =	*65*	*49*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

What Should Your Party Leadership Stop Doing?
(by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	 Senate	 **Total**	Personal Staff House	 Senate	 **Total**	Committee Staff House	 Senate	 **Total**
Leadership should not be "too dictatorial"	5.7%	7.4%	**6.1%**	6.5%	6.7%	**6.6%**	3.6%	8.0%	**5.7%**
Leadership is too accomodating to the other party or to the White House	6.9	-	**5.3**	13.0	6.7	**11.5**	10.7	8.0	**9.4**
Leadership is too partisan or uncompromising	5.7	-	**4.3**	6.5	-	**4.9**	-	-	-
Leadership needs to prevent time wasting procedures	2.3	7.4	**3.5**	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	8.0	**3.8**
Leadership spends too much time dealing with process instead of goals	3.4	-	**2.6**	6.5	13.5	**8.2**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Leaders need to better manage their resources	2.3	-	**1.8**	-	6.7	**1.6**	-	-	-
Leadership is too preoccupied with the press or their image	1.1	-	**.9**	4.3	-	**3.3**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Respondent spoke of leadership's role on a specific policy	1.1	-	**.9**	4.3	6.7	**4.9**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Other	6.9	-	**5.3**	4.3	-	**3.3**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
n =	*87*	*27*	***114***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

What Should Your Party Leadership Stop Doing? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	**Members** Democratic	Republican	**Total**	**Personal Staff** Democratic	Republican	**Total**	**Committee Staff** Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Leadership should not be "too dictatorial"	7.7%	4.1%	**6.1%**	8.1%	4.2%	**6.6%**	11.1%	0%	**5.7%**
Leadership is too accomodating to the other party or to the White House	-	12.2	**5.3**	8.1	16.7	**11.5**	7.4	11.5	**9.4**
Leadership is too partisan or uncompromising	3.1	6.1	**4.3**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	-	-	-
Leadership needs to prevent time wasting procedures	4.6	2.0	**3.5**	2.7	-	**1.6**	-	7.7	**3.8**
Leadership spends too much time dealing with process instead of goals	4.6	-	**2.6**	10.8	4.2	**8.2**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Leaders need to better manage their resources	1.5	2.0	**1.8**	2.7	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
Leadership is too preoccupied with the press or their image	1.5	-	**.9**	5.4	-	**3.3**	3.7	-	**1.9**
Respondent spoke of leadership's role on a specific policy	1.5	-	**.9**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**	7.4	-	**3.8**
Other	4.6	6.1	**5.3**	5.4	-	**3.3**	-	7.7	**3.8**
n =	*65*	*49*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

3.6 How Long Will You Stay?

"I had a notion of how long I wanted to stay in Congress when I got here. But I have learned you can be vital and dynamic in Congress at any age--when I see the contribution Claude Pepper still makes to Congress, well then I think I should be flexible, and as long as I'm healthy and excited by the work, I'd like to stay here." --a House Democrat

Members

The Center asked its final question to get some insight both on how members and staff plan their own Capitol Hill careers and on how they really feel about their work.. One of the more memorable answers came from a House Democrat who began with a rhetorical flourish, then stopped himself by saying, "Boy, that's a load of pure B.S., isn't it? Forget what I just said and let me give you a real answer."

For the most part, members expressed their satisfaction with legislative life. Overall, 86.7 percent of members said they would either like to stay for a total 14 years or more, or indefinitely. Among members, 56.6 percent gave general answers like "I want to remain indefinitely" (23.9 percent), "I haven't decided at this time" (15 percent), "I want to remain as long as my health is good" (10.6 percent), or "I want to remain as long as I am effective" (7 percent).

Another 43.3 percent of members put some kind of time limit on the number of years they wished to serve. Wanting to serve 20 years or more was the leading answer, given by 19.6 percent of members; 13.2 percent said they would like to remain a total of 8 to 12 years; and another 10.6 percent wanted to remain for 14 to 18 years. Between chambers, 23 percent of the Representatives said they would like to stay on the Hill for 20 or more years, while 23 percent of the Senators said they would like stay for 14 to 18 years.

A few members had some very specific career plans, including the House Democrat who said, "There are some things I would like to get done, so if I can't get to be chairman of a major subcommittee in the next eight years, I'd like to seek a cabinet post." A more typical answer came from a House Democrat who said, "We can't set arbitrary time limits for members. In my case...I do want someone to kick me out as soon as I reach 65. Because there *is* life after Congress."

When asked to elaborate on their answers, most members gave general responses such as "congressional service is highly rewarding" (22.3 percent) or that legislative life is a "good way of life" (18.8 percent). The third most frequent answer was that some members needed to accumulate additional seniority (15.2 percent).

A handful of members did say they planned on leaving soon. Three Republican Representatives said they planned on leaving soon because they were frustrated by the prospect of legislative life as members of the minority party. "If I could, I'd love to retire at 65 years old as the Speaker," said one of the Republicans. "But that isn't likely to happen. I may consider running for a Senate seat, since Republicans there can be a more effective voice." Another three Republicans and one Democratic Representative said they would probably leave due to high level of frustration with life in Congress--one saying he would like to return to state politics.

Staff

While a only a handful of members said they would like to leave in the near future, the survey found that a significant number of personal staff were planning to leave soon. For personal staff, 31.1 percent said they would like to leave their jobs soon. Another 13.1 percent--mostly Democratic staff--said they had made no specific plans and would decide over time. Significantly, 41.6 percent of Republican personal staff said they would like to leave the Hill soon, as compared with 24.3 percent of Democrats.

For the senior committee staff, 15.1 percent said they wanted to stay indefinitely, 26.4 percent said they had no clear idea but would decide with time when they should leave, and another 20.8 percent said they wanted to leave soon. The remainder gave answers indicating a specific time frame. Senate staffers were three times more likely to say they wanted to leave than their House counterparts, with 32 percent of Senate staff saying they would leave their jobs soon, as opposed to 10.7 percent of House staffers.

However, 31.7 percent of committee staffers mentioned the rewards of service on Capitol Hill. "I like working on the Hill--it's satisfying work" summed up the attitude of a number of respondents. For others, work on Capitol Hill has enormous appeal. A Senate Democrat who noncommittally answered he would like to work on the Hill indefinitely was asked to explain why. He said, "Other than I like the work, I just don't know why. I really never expected to be here as long as I have been already. I suppose I will work here forever--though now that I said *that*, I suppose I will be fired this afternoon." He was not fired that afternoon, and is still working in the Senate.

How Long Would You Like to Stay on Capitol Hill?
(by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
2 to 6 years	0%	0%	**0%**	10.9%	20.0%	**13.1%**	7.1%	4.0%	**5.7%**
8 to 12 years	12.7	15.4	**13.3**	23.9	26.6	**24.6**	10.7	16.0	**13.2**
14 to 18 years	6.9	23.1	**10.6**	17.4	13.4	**16.4**	7.1	-	**3.8**
20 years or more	23.0	7.7	**19.5**	4.3	6.6	**4.9**	14.3	8.0	**11.3**
Indefinitely	27.6	11.5	**23.9**	23.9	13.4	**21.3**	17.9	12.0	**15.1**
"As long as I am effective"	6.9	7.7	**7.1**	8.7	6.6	**8.2**	3.6	-	**1.9**
"As long as my health is good"	10.3	11.5	**10.6**	-	-	-	3.6	-	**1.9**
Don't know, will decide with time	12.6	23.1	**15.0**	10.9	13.4	**11.5**	25.0	28.0	**26.4**
Respondent plans to leave soon	-	-	-	-	-	-	10.7	32.0	**20.7**
n =	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

How Long Would You Like to Stay on Capitol Hill?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
2 to 6 years	0%	0%	**0%**	10.8%	16.7%	**13.1%**	7.4%	3.8%	**5.7%**
8 to 12 years	9.4	18.5	**13.3**	16.2	37.5	**24.6**	14.8	11.5	**13.2**
14 to 18 years	9.4	12.2	**10.6**	16.2	16.7	**16.4**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
20 years or more	18.7	20.4	**19.5**	-	12.5	**4.9**	7.4	15.4	**11.3**
Indefinitely	26.6	20.4	**23.9**	27.0	12.5	**21.3**	22.2	7.7	**15.1**
"As long as I am effective"	7.7	6.1	**7.1**	13.6	-	**8.2**	-	3.8	**1.9**
"As long as my health is good"	14.1	6.1	**10.6**	-	-	-	3.7	-	**1.9**
Don't know, will decide with time	14.1	16.3	**15.0**	16.2	4.1	**11.5**	22.2	30.8	**26.4**
Respondent plans to leave soon	-	-	-	-	-	-	18.6	23.2	**20.7**
n =	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Why Do You Want to Stay on Capitol Hill as Long as You Do? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Rewards of public service	19.7%	30.8%	**22.3%**	11.4%	26.6%	**15.3%**	34.7%	27.8%	**31.7%**
Job, working conditions are good	20.9	11.5	**18.8**	13.6	-	**10.2**	-	-	-
Hope to gain more seniority or to advance in career	17.4	7.7	**15.2**	13.6	-	**10.2**	-	-	-
Working on the Hill "not a career"	9.3	-	**7.1**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Respondent would like to retire after a specific time	5.8	7.7	**6.3**	2.2	6.7	**21.3**	17.4	11.1	**14.6**
Respondent frustrated with the job	2.4	7.7	**3.6**	11.4	13.4	**11.9**	4.4	11.1	**7.3**
Frustrated by minority party status	3.5	-	**2.7**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Family or personal considerations affecting decision	2.4	-	**1.8**	-	-	-	13.0	5.6	**9.8**
Respondent needs to "move onto other things"	-	-	-	27.3	26.6	**27.1**	36.1	38.8	**7.3**
Leaving for personal reasons or better pay	-	-	-	9.1	6.7	**8.5**	4.4	5.6	**4.9**
Respondent enjoys rewards of particular office	-	-	-	11.4	20.0	**13.6**	-	-	-
Other or don't know	18.6	34.7	**22.3**	-	-	-	-	-	-
n =	*86*	*26*	*112*	*44*	*15*	*59*	*18*	*23*	*41*

Why Do You Want to Stay on Capitol Hill as Long as You Do?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Rewards of public service	30.2%	12.2%	**22.3%**	21.6%	4.6%	**15.3%**	28.6%	35.0%	**31.7%**
Job, working conditions are good	20.6	16.3	**18.8**	8.1	13.6	**10.2**	-	-	-
Hope to gain more seniority or to advance in career	15.9	14.3	**15.2**	10.8	9.1	**10.2**	-	-	-
Working on the Hill "not a career"	4.7	10.2	**7.1**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Respondent would like to retire after a specific time	3.2	10.2	**6.3**	-	9.1	**21.3**	9.5	20.0	**14.6**
Respondent frustrated with the job	1.6	6.2	**3.6**	18.9	-	**11.9**	9.5	5.0	**7.3**
Frustrated by minority party status	-	6.2	**2.7**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Family or personal considerations affecting decision	1.6	2.0	**1.8**	-	-	-	14.3	5.0	**9.8**
Respondent needs to "move onto other things"	-	-	-	16.2	45.4	**27.1**	38.1	25.0	**7.3**
Leaving for personal reasons or better pay	-	-	-	5.5	13.6	**8.5**	-	10.0	**4.9**
Respondent enjoys rewards of particular office	-	-	-	18.9	4.6	**13.6**	-	-	-
Other or don't know	22.2	22.4	**22.3**	-	-	-	-	-	-
n =	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*22*	***59***	*20*	*21*	***41***

4

The Impact of Money On Congress

Campaign Finance

"I knew Congress well before I came here, but I did not know the amount of time consumed by fundraising and how that encroaches on your ability to work here. It devours one's time--you spend the two or three years before your reelection fundraising. The other years, you're helping others." --*a Republican Senator*

The first federal law regulating campaign finance was the Tillman Act of 1907 which prohibited corporations from making direct political contributions. In 1925, laws were passed placing contribution limits on donations to federal campaigns, though poor enforcement and a large number of loopholes made these limits ineffective. In 1943, Congress passed an additional ban on direct contributions from labor unions.

In the 1960s, the rapid growth in campaign costs, coupled with news stories on the "selling of ambassadorships" and undue influence from large contributors, led to calls for wholesale reform of the campaign finance system. In 1971, Congress passed the Federal Elections Campaign Act (FECA), which set tougher federal contribution limits and set some spending limits on congressional elections. But the Watergate scandal motivated members to pass still stricter laws to prevent campaign finance abuses. In 1974, amendments to the FECA limited spending for presidential races, created a partial public financing scheme for presidential elections, established the Federal Election Commission to monitor federal campaign practices, and set strict limits on how much money could be spent in House and Senate races. The 1974 amendments also created fixed rules on political funds, legally known as separate segregated funds, but better known as "Political Action Committees" or PACs.

However, some provisions of the 1974 amendments were struck down by the Supreme Court in the 1976 *Buckley vs. Valeo* decision. Among other rulings, the high court said spending could be limited in presidential races because the limits were tied to a voluntary system of public financing which was provided. But because the spending limits placed on congressional races were automatic, not voluntary, they were ruled as an unconstitutional restriction on freedom speech.

Since that decision, amendments added to the the FECA in 1979 tried to clarify the role between money used for non-federal elections and funds for federal campaigns. These amendments alerted many candidates and contributors to the potential of using nonfederal money, often known as "soft money," which can be used to indirectly influence federal races. Often, these non-federal accounts can accept corporate and labor union funds that are banned under federal law.

Even though there have been frequent attempts to reform the campaign finance system, there have been few agreements between the House and the Senate on how to do it. In 1979 the House passed partial public financing for Congress in the Obey-Railsback bill. but this bill was never passed by the Senate. In 1986, the roles were reversed when the Senate passed the Boren Amendment to limit how much PAC money can be raised and spent by candidates--but this issue never came up in the House. In early 1987, the Senate considered the Boren-Byrd Act, which would create a partial public financing system for the Senate, along with restricting the use of "soft money" in elections. In 1987, this legislation had the support of a majority of Senate Democrats, but these were not enough votes to overcome a Republican filibuster.

While the survey indicated that members and staff were frustrated with the campaign finance system, their responses also revealed strong partisan differences. Only two reform proposals had a high degree of bipartisan support--more disclosure of nonfederal "soft money" accounts, and a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes. A third proposal, to end federal contribution limits, had a high level of bipartisan opposition.

The Center first asked if the campaign finance system made legislative compromise more difficult. A charge frequently made by critics of the system is that the need for election funds may influence the way members vote in committee or on the floor. For members, 49.9 percent said campaign finance considerations did not affect legislative compromise, while another 8.8 percent said they "probably" did not affect compromise. Among members, 20.4 percent of members said campaign contributions did affect legislative compromise.

Many of the members and personal staff who believed the current system did affect compromise felt its impact was only at the "margins" and did not happen on important votes. "I've seen this happen on obscure issues before a committee," said one House Democrat, "but it will never happen on the really important issues." A House Republican staff director said, "This hasn't happened in this office. But when I worked for another member, who got calls from some contributors who were friends; [if that member had] no particular feelings about a bill one way or the other and it didn't affect the district, he would vote with his friends."

Those who claimed campaign finance did not affect compromise frequently used the 1986 tax reform bill as an example of how members vote independently and are not influenced by fundraising considerations. "Look at last year's tax bill," said a Republican Senator. "The special interests pulled out all the stops on that one, and the bill still got through." Other members maintained that political contributors were more likely to seek out members only after they established a track record on particular issues.

If the respondents felt ambivalent about the campaign finance system as a whole, many felt more strongly about one component of the system--Political Action Committees. In the last few years, PACs have been the subject of an intense debate within Congress. When the Center asked what the impact of PACs is on Congress, a 43.3 percent plurality of members said the influence of PACs is largely or somewhat negative. Almost 10 percent members believe the conflicting points of view represented by various PACs cancel each other out. In a similar vein, 18.4 percent of members believed PACs had a positive impact by ensuring that many points of view were heard in a policy debate. A majority of committee and personal staff had stronger negative feelings--not a single committee staffer said that PACs had a positive impact, while 60.3 percent said PACs had a negative influence on Congress.

Members and staff had a number of stories to tell about PACs and their impact on Congress. A Democratic Senator said that a PAC director once told him "their contributions actually swung a committee vote, so [PAC directors] are bragging that they can buy votes." A conservative Republican Representative, interviewed the week after a Senate committee passed legislation easing federal regulations on highway billboards, said, "You're asking me [about PACs] after the highway beautification vote? Jeez, it was the liberals who sold out on that one." A House Democrat bluntly stated that "PACs and interest group contributions have led to the 'Balkanization' into separate little power fiefdoms."

One House Democrat thought the problem was not abuses by PACs as much as it is members abusing PACs. "[Members] often extort money from PACs," he said. "It is brutal what [we] can do to get [the money.]" Other members said that the public perception of what PACs do is more important than what the PACs actually do.

Another frequent criticism of the campaign finance system is that raising money takes time away from official duties.

When members responded to an earlier question on how they manage their time, half said they would like to spend less time raising money. Similarly, when the Center asked members if raising money interfered with their work day, about half said it did. Overall, 50.4 percent of members said campaign finance considerations did not affect their work day, a total of 47.7 percent said financial considerations had either significant or "some" effect on their work, and 1.9 percent of members said raising money had more impact on their personal time. Among personal staff, 50.8 percent said campaign finance had either a significant or "some" effect on their employer's workday, 45.9 percent said it had no effect, and 3.3 percent said the impact was greater on a member's personal time.

But there were significant chamber differences on this question. In comparing chambers, 64 percent of Senators and almost 87 percent of Senate personal staff said raising money did affect the time they spent on legislative work, while only 43.1 percent of House members and 39.1 percent of House staff said the same.

One reason for these differences between chambers may be because it is increasingly more expensive to run for the Senate than it is for the House. Using Federal Election Commission figures, the Center calculated the average cost of a 1986 House election at $268,000, a 26 percent increase over the 1982 House average. In the Senate, the average 1986 race cost $2,772,000, a 60 percent increase over 1982. Thus, Senators are aware that they need to spend increasing amounts of time to raise larger sums of money.

To get a complete sense of how much time is spent on fundraising, the Center asked members if they had a full- or part-time fundraising staff. Overall, 36.6 percent of members said they had a full time fundraising staff, while 15.1 percent said they had a part time fundraising staff. Another 29.3 percent said they had no permanent staff, 8.5 percent said they relied on volunteer labor, and the remaining answers were divided between two other categories.

In Your Experience, Does the Campaign Finance System Make Legislators Less Inclined to Compromise on Legislative Issues?
(by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Yes	19.8%	22.2%	**20.4%**	18.2%	20.0%	**18.6%**	25.0%	28.0%	**26.4%**
Probably	8.1	25.9	**12.4**	20.5	13.3	**18.6**	10.7	12.0	**11.3**
Probably Not	8.1	11.1	**8.8**	2.3	13.3	**5.1**	3.6	12.0	**7.5**
No	55.8	29.6	**49.6**	52.3	53.4	**52.5**	53.6	40.0	**47.2**
Effect varies with situation or individual	2.3	3.7	**2.7**	-	-	-	-	-	-
No Opinion/Don't Know	5.9	7.5	**6.1**	6.7	-	**5.2**	7.1	8.0	**7.6**
n=	*86*	*27*	*113*	*44*	*15*	*59*	*28*	*25*	*53*

In Your Experience, Does the Campaign Finance System Make Legislators Less Inclined to Compromise on Legislative Issues?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Yes	28.1%	10.2	**20.4%**	17.1%	20.8%	**18.6%**	29.6%	23.1%	**26.4%**
Probably	14.1	10.2	**12.4**	20.0	16.7	**18.6**	14.8	7.7	**11.3**
Probably Not	4.2	14.3	**8.8**	9.6	-	**5.1**	7.4	7.7	**7.5**
No	46.9	53.1	**49.6**	45.7	62.5	**52.5**	40.7	53.8	**47.2**
Effect varies with situation or individual	3.1	2.0	**2.7**	-	-	-	-	-	-
No Opinion/Don't Know	3.1	10.2	**6.1**	8.6	-	**5.2**	7.5	7.7	**7.6**
n =	*64*	*49*	*113*	*35*	*24*	*59*	*27*	*26*	*53*

How Would You Explain the Impact of Campaign Contributions on Congress? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	**Members** House	 Senate	 Total	**Personal Staff** House	 Senate	 Total	**Committee Staff** House	 Senate	 Total
Has no impact because Members hold independent views	20.7%	18.5%	**20.2%**	15.2%	20.0%	**16.4%**	21.4%	8.0%	**15.1%**
Contributors get access to members	17.2	14.8	**16.7**	28.3	20.0	**26.2**	28.6	16.0	**22.6**
Competing contributor interests balance each other out	6.9	-	**7.0**	4.3	13.3	**6.6**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Campaign finance concerns have made Congress more parochial	4.6	3.7	**4.4**	-	-	-	3.6	-	**1.9**
Several contributors promote diversity of opinion on issues	2.3	-	**1.8**	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
Current regulations provide adequate safeguards against abuses	1.1	-	**0.9**	-	-	-	6	-	-
Increasing costs of campaigns require more time raising money, meeting people, etc.	-	3.7	**0.9**	-	6.7	**1.6**	-	8.0	**3.8**
Other	2.3	11.1	**4.4**	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
No explanation given	44.8	40.7	**43.9**	47.8	40.0	**45.9**	42.9	64.0	**52.8**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

How Would You Explain the Impact of Campaign Contributions on Congress? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Has no impact because Members hold independent views	18.5%	22.4%	**20.2%**	10.8%	25.0%	**16.4%**	11.1%	19.2%	**15.1%**
Contributors get access to members	24.6	6.1	**16.7**	27.0	25.0	**26.2**	22.2	23.1	**22.6**
Competing contributor interests balance each other out	4.6	10.2	**7.0**	8.1	4.2	**6.6**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
Campaign finance concerns have made Congress more parochial	4.6	4.1	**4.4**	-	-	-	3.7	-	**1.9**
Several contributors promote diversity of opinion on issues	3.1	-	**1.8**	-	4.2	**1.6**	-	-	-
Current regulations provide adequate safeguards against abuses	1.6	-	**0.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Increasing costs of campaigns require more time raising money, meeting people, etc.	1.5	-	**0.9**	2.7	-	**1.6**	7.4	-	**3.8**
Other	1.5	8.2	**4.4**	2.7	-	**1.6**	-	-	-
No explanation given	40.0	49.0	**43.9**	48.6	41.7	**45.9**	51.9	53.8	**52.8**
n =	*49*	*65*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

What Effect Have Political Action Committees Had on How Congress Works?
(by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Positive effect	19.5%	15.4%	18.6%	10.9%	0%	8.2%	0%	0%	0%
No effect	20.7	11.5	18.6	17.4	20.0	18.0	17.9	16.0	17.0
Effect mixed	19.5	19.2	19.5	15.2	13.3	14.8	7.1	16.0	11.3
Somewhat negative effect	16.2	15.4	15.9	21.7	6.7	18.0	7.1	4.0	5.7
Negative effect	24.1	38.5	27.4	30.4	60.0	37.7	60.8	60.0	60.3
No opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	4.4	-	3.3	7.1	4.0	5.7
n=	*87*	*26*	*113*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

What Effect Have Political Action Committees Had on How Congress Works?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Positive effect	10.9%	28.6%	**18.6%**	2.7%	16.7%	**8.2%**	0%	0%	**0%**
No effect	17.2	20.4	**18.6**	13.5	25.0	**18.0**	14.8	19.2	**17.0**
Effect mixed	15.6	24.5	**19.5**	13.5	16.7	**14.8**	14.8	7.7	**11.3**
Somewhat negative effect	21.9	8.1	**15.9**	18.9	16.7	**18.0**	11.1	-	**5.7**
Negative effect	34.4	18.4	**27.4**	48.6	20.8	**37.7**	51.8	69.2	**60.3**
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	2.8	4.1	**3.3**	7.5	3.9	**5.7**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Please Explain How PACs Effect Congressional Operations? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
PACs increase campaign costs, requiring more time spent raising money, meeting people, etc.	24.1%	37.0%	**27.2%**	15.2%	20.0%	**16.4%**	25.9%	34.6%	**30.2%**
PAC contributions get access to members	25.3	29.6	**27.2**	37.4	53.3	**41.0**	37.0	26.9	**32.1**
The large number of PACs promotes diversity on issues	18.4	18.5	**18.4**	13.3	13.0	**13.1**	3.7	-	**1.9**
The large number of different PACs balances each other out	8.0	14.8	**9.6**	2.2	-	**1.6**	7.4	7.7	**7.5**
Members hold independent views	10.3	7.4	**9.6**	8.7	6.7	**8.2**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
PACs make it easier to raise money	8.0	3.7	**7.0**	4.3	-	**3.3**	-	-	**-**
Current regtulations are adequate to prevent abuses	5.7	-	**4.4**	-	-	**-**	-	-	**-**
PACs have made members more parochial	1.1	-	**.09**	4.3	-	**3.3**	-	4.0	**1.9**
Other	18.4	14.8	**17.5**	-	-	**-**	3.7	-	**1.9**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Please Explain How PACs Effect Congressional Operations? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
PACs increase campaign costs, requiring more time spent raising money, meeting people, etc.	29.2%	24.5%	**27.2%**	21.6%	8.3%	**16.4%**	25.9%	34.6%	**30.2%**
PAC contributions get access to members	30.8	20.4	**27.2**	51.4	25.0%	**41.0**	37.0	26.9	**32.1**
The large number of PACs promotes diversity on issues	9.2	30.6	**18.4**	9.2	25.0	**13.1**	3.7	-	**1.9**
The large number of different PACs balances each other out	9.2	10.2	**9.6**	9.2	-	**1.6**	7.4	7.7	**7.5**
Members hold independent views	9.2	10.2	**9.6**	9.2	12.5	**8.2**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
PACs make it easier to raise money	6.2	8.2	**7.0**	6.2	4.2	**3.3**	-	-	**-**
Current regtulations are adequate to prevent abuses	4.6	4.1	**4.4**	-	-	**-**	-	-	**-**
PACs have made members more parochial	1.5	-	**.09**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	-	3.8	**1.9**
Other	13.8	22.4	**17.5**	-	-	**-**	3.7	-	**1.9**
n=	*65*	*49*	*114*	*37*	*24*	*61*	*27*	*26*	*53*

Do the Demands of Campaign Fundraising Cut into the Time You/Your Member Devotes to Legislative Work?
(by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total
Yes, significantly	23.3%	52.0%	**29.7%**	39.1%	73.3%	**47.5%**
Has some effect on legislative time	19.8	12.0	**18.0**	-	13.3	**3.3**
Fundraising has a greater impact on personal time	1.1	4.0	**1.9**	2.2	6.7	**3.3**
Not much effect on legislative time	24.4	4.0	**19.8**	17.4	-	**13.1**
None at all	31.4	28.0	**30.6**	41.3	6.7	**32.8**
n=	*86*	*25*	***111***	*46*	*15*	***61***

Do the Demands of Campaign Fundraising Cut into the Time You/Your Member Devotes to Legislative Work? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	**Members**			**Personal Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Yes, significantly	33.3%	25.0%	**29.7%**	56.8%	33.3%	**47.5%**
Has some effect on legislative time	23.8	10.4	**18.0**	-	8.3	**3.3**
Fundraising has a greater impact on personal time	3.2	-	**1.9**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**
Not much effect on legislative time	22.2	16.7	**19.8**	10.8	16.7	**13.1**
None at all	17.5	47.9	**30.6**	29.7	37.5	**32.8**
n=	*63*	*48*	***111***	*37*	*24*	***61***

How Would You Explain Your Answer on How Fundraising Affects Your Time? (by Chamber)

Members and Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Campaigns are so expensive, you have to raise money	34.0%	60.0%	**39.7%**	39.3%	66.6%	**44.1%**
Raising money is "distasteful" to the respondent	15.1	13.2	**14.7**	14.3	16.7	**14.7**
Respondent has a safe district/state so fundraising is not a big concern	13.2	6.7	**11.8**	3.6	-	**2.9**
Respondent has a marginal national/state so fundraising is a big concern	9.4	6.7	**8.8**	7.1	-	**5.9**
Respondent doesn't spend much time raising money	7.5	-	**5.9**	7.1	-	**5.9**
Respondent has an open door to the office and will see all constituents	5.7	-	**4.4**	3.6	-	**2.9**
Respondent has an easy time raising money due to committee assignments, party affiliations, etc.	5.7	6.7	**4.4**	-	-	**-**
Respondent lets others do fundraising	3.7	6.7	**4.4**	7.1	16.7	**8.8**
Other	5.9	6.7	**5.9**	17.9	-	**14.8**
n=	*53*	*15*	***68***	*28*	*6*	***34***

How Would You Explain Your Answer on How Fundraising Affects Your Time? (by Party)

Members and Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Members Democratic	Members Republican	Members Total	Personal Staff Democratic	Personal Staff Republican	Personal Staff Total
Campaigns are so expensive, you have to raise money	43.2%	34.4%	39.7%	42.1%	46.6%	44.1%
Raising money is "distasteful" to the respondent	13.5	3.2	8.8	10.5	-	5.9
Respondent has a safe district/state so fundraising is not a big concern	13.5	16.1	14.7	15.8	13.3	14.7
Respondent has a marginal national/state so fundraising is a big concern	8.2	-	4.4	-	-	-
Respondent doesn't spend much time raising money	8.1	-	4.4	10.5	6.7	8.8
Respondent has an open door to the office and will see all constituents	5.4	19.4	11.8	-	6.7	2.9
Respondent has an easy time raising money due to committee assignments, party affiliations, etc.	2.7	6.5	4.4	5.3	-	2.9
Respondent lets others do fundraising	2.7	9.7	5.9	6.7	6.7	5.9
Other	2.7	9.7	5.9	20.0	20.0	14.8
n =	*37*	*31*	*68*	*19*	*15*	*34*

Do the Demands of Campaign Fundraising Cut into the Time the Staff Devotes to Its Legislative Work? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total
Yes, significantly	3.5%	20.0%	7.3%	19.6%	21.4%	20.0%
Has some effect on legislative time	18.8	16.0	18.2	-	7.2	1.6
Not much effect on legislative time	10.6	16.0	11.8	15.2	-	11.7
None at all	67.1	48.0	62.7	65.2	71.4	66.7
n=	*85*	*25*	*110*	*46*	*14*	*60*

Do the Demands of Campaign Fundraising Cut into the Time the Staff Devotes to Its Legislative Work?
(by Party)

Members and Personal Staff	Members			Personal Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Yes, significantly	11.3%	2.1%	**7.3%**	21.6%	17.4%	**20.0%**
Has some effect on legislative time	25.8	8.3	**18.2**	-	4.3	**1.6**
Not much effect on legislative time	8.1	16.7	**11.8**	13.5	8.7	**11.7**
None at all	54.8	72.9	**62.7**	64.9	69.6	**66.7**
n=	*62*	*48*	***110***	*46*	*14*	***60***

Do You Have a Full or Part Time Fundraising Staff?
(by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff	Members			Personal Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Office has full time staff	33.9%	53.8%	**36.6%**	46.2%	80.0%	**60.9%**
Office has part time staff	19.1	-	**15.9**	7.7	-	**4.3**
No fundraising staff	29.4	30.8	**29.3**	7.7	-	**4.3**
Office keeps all fundraising functions seperate from office work	8.8	7.7	**8.5**	38.4	10.0	**26.2**
Volunteers do fundraising work	8.8	7.7	**8.5**	-	10.0	**4.3**
n=	*68*	*13*	***81***	*13*	*10*	***23***

Do You Have a Full or Part Time Fundraising Staff? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff	Members			Personal Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	To-
Office has full time staff	30.4%	44.4%	**36.6%**	61.0%	60.0%	**60.9%**
Office has part time staff	19.6	11.1	**15.9**	5.6	-	**4.3**
No fundraising staff	28.3	30.6	**29.3**	5.6	-	**4.3**
Office keeps all fundraising functions seperate from office work	13.0	2.8	**8.5**	22.2	40.0	**26.2**
Volunteers do fundraising work	8.7	8.3	**8.5**	5.6	-	**4.3**
n=	*46*	*35*	***81***	*18*	*5*	***23***

4.1 Reactions to Campaign Finance Reforms

The Center asked respondents for their reactions to a number of campaign finance proposals:

- Lowering the $5,000 contribution limit for PACs while increasing the $1,000 for individuals;
- Increasing the amount of money the national parties' House and Senate campaign committees may contribute to federal races;
- Requiring radio and television stations to give a certain amount of free air time to candidates;
- Requiring public disclosure of all national parties' financial accounts, including their non-federal "soft money" accounts;
- Limiting the total amount of money a campaign can receive from PACs;
- Providing an overall campaign spending limit for candidates who accept partial public financing for their campaigns;
- Abolishing all contribution limits for political donations while maintaining full disclosure of all contributions; and
- Creating a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes.

Among members, support and opposition were split along party lines on most of the proposals. Only two proposals, more disclosure of nonfederal "soft money" accounts, and a study commission on campaign finance received strong support among members from both parties, while both Republicans and Democrats opposed a proposal to end campaign contribution limits while maintaining full disclosure of these contributions.

Republicans opposed most of the proposals--indeed, except for soft money and a study commission, the only other proposal supported by Republicans was to increase the contribution limits from national political parties to party candidates. Democrats, in contrast, supported all the proposals but one--ending contribution limits. Of the seven proposals supported by Democrats, six were supported by majorities, while the proposal to increase party contributions to party candidates was supported by a plurality.

Between chambers, Representatives and Senators held similar opinions on all but one proposal--a 69.2 percent majority of Senators favored a proposal to reduce PAC contribution limits from the current $5,000 maximum while raising individual contribution limits. Only 41.8 percent of Representatives agreed with that proposal. This difference of opinion between the chambers may reflect the differences between campaign fundraising strategies in the House and the Senate. Traditionally, Representatives have raised a much larger share of their campaign funds from PACs than have Senators, although the campaign finance figures for 1986 show that Senate candidates are rapidly closing this gap.

How Do You Feel About These Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	**Members** House	 Senate	 **Total**	**Personal Staff** House	 Senate	 **Total**
Decrease the amount a PAC may give to a candidate, but raise the amount an individual can contribute						
Strongly Agree	8.1%	38.5%	**15.2%**	13.0%	33.3%	**18.0%**
Somewhat Agree	33.7	30.7	**33.0**	34.8	13.3	**29.5**
No Opinion	8.2	-	**6.2**	8.7	13.4	**9.8**
Somewhat Disagree	30.2	15.4	**26.8**	34.8	26.7	**32.9**
Strongly Disagree	19.8	15.4	**18.8**	8.7	13.3	**9.8**
n =	*86*	*26*	***112***	*46*	*15*	***61***

How Do You Feel About These Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members Democratic	Members Republican	Members Total	Personal Staff Democratic	Personal Staff Republican	Personal Staff Total
Decrease the amount a PAC may give to a candidate, but raise the amount an individual can contribute						
Strongly Agree	14.3%	16.3%	15.2%	21.6%	12.5%	18.0%
Somewhat Agree	42.9	20.4	33.0	35.1	20.8	29.5
No Opinion	7.9	4.1	6.2	10.8	8.3	9.8
Somewhat Disagree	22.2	32.7	26.8	27.0	41.7	32.8
Strongly Disagree	12.7	26.5	18.8	5.4	16.7	9.8
n=	63	49	112	37	24	61

How Do You Feel About These Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Raise the total amounts national parties may spend on or contribute to House and Senate races						
Strongly Agree	18.6%	23.1%	**19.6%**	19.6%	20.0%	**19.7%**
Somewhat Agree	38.4	38.5	**38.4**	41.3	40.0	**41.0**
No Opinion	12.8	-	**9.8**	8.7	-	**6.7**
Somewhat Disagree	12.8	19.2	**14.3**	23.9	33.3	**26.2**
Strongly Disagree	17.4	19.2	**17.9**	6.5	6.7	**6.7**
n=	*86*	*26*	***112***	*116*	*15*	***61***

How Do You Feel About These Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff		
Members and Personal Staff Only	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Raise the total amounts national parties may spend on or contribute to House and Senate races						
Strongly Agree	7.9%	34.7%	**19.6%**	16.2%	25.0%	**19.7%**
Somewhat Agree	34.9	42.9	**38.4**	43.2	37.5	**41.7**
No Opinion	8.0	12.2	**9.8**	8.2	4.2	**6.7**
Somewhat Disagree	19.0	8.2	**14.3**	29.7	20.8	**26.2**
Strongly Disagree	30.2	2.0	**17.9**	2.7	12.5	**6.7**
n=	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***

How Do You Feel About These Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	**Members**			**Personal Staff**		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Require radio and television stations to provide a certain amount of free time to candidates						
Strongly Agree	17.6%	26.9%	**19.8%**	23.9%	27.9%	**27.9%**
Somewhat Agree	25.9	23.1	**25.2**	34.8	29.5	**29.5**
No Opinion	11.8	7.7	**10.9**	8.7	9.8	**9.8**
Somewhat Disagree	18.8	23.1	**19.8**	19.6	19.7	**19.7**
Strongly Disagree	25.9	19.2	**24.3**	13.0	13.1	**13.1**
n =	*85*	*26*	***111***	*46*	*15*	***61***

How Do You Feel About These Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Require radio and television station to provide a certain amount of free air time to candidates						
Strongly Agree	28.6%	8.3%	**19.8%**	35.1%	16.7%	**27.9%**
Somewhat Agree	31.8	16.7	**25.2**	29.8	29.2	**29.5**
No Opinion	7.9	14.6	**10.8**	8.1	12.5	**9.8**
Somewhat Disagree	19.0	20.8	**19.8**	18.9	20.8	**19.7**
Strongly Disagree	12.7	39.6	**24.4**	8.1	20.8	**13.1**
n=	*63*	*49*	***111***	*37*	*24*	***61***

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff		
Members and Personal Staff Only	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Require disclosure of all contributions to accounts held by the national parties, including so-called "soft money" accounts that raise funds from corporations, labor unions and other sources that may not contribute directly to federal campaigns						
Strongly Agree	52.3%	69.2%	**56.2%**	50.0%	46.7%	**49.2%**
Somewhat Agree	38.4	26.9	**35.7**	30.4	33.3	**31.1**
No Opinion	3.5	-	**2.7**	6.5	13.3	**8.2**
Somewhat Disagree	3.5	-	**2.7**	10.9	-	**8.2**
Strongly Disagree	2.3	3.9	**2.7**	2.2	6.7	**3.3**
n=	*86*	*26*	***112***	*46*	*15*	***61***

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members Democratic	Members Republican	Members Total	Personal Staff Democratic	Personal Staff Republican	Personal Staff Total
Require disclosure of all contributions to accounts held by the national parties, including so-called "soft money" accounts that raise funds from corporations, labor unions and other sources that may not contribute directly to federal campaigns						
Strongly Agree	58.7%	53.1%	53.2%	51.3%	45.8%	49.2%
Somewhat Agree	34.9	36.7	35.7	32.4	29.2	31.1
No Opinion	1.6	4.1	2.7	5.4	12.5	8.2
Somewhat Disagree	3.2	2.0	2.7	10.9	4.2	8.2
Strongly Disagree	1.6	4.1	2.7	-	8.3	3.3
n=	*63*	*49*	*112*	*37*	*24*	*61*

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members House	Senate	**Total**	Personal Staff House	Senate	**Total**
Limit the total amount of money a candidate can receive from all PACs combined						
Strongly Agree	24.4%	30.8%	**25.9%**	21.7%	40.0%	**26.2%**
Somewhat Agree	33.7	23.1	**31.3**	39.1	26.7	**36.1**
No Opinion	4.7	3.8	**4.4**	-	-	-
Somewhat Disagree	16.3	23.1	**17.9**	19.6	20.0	**19.7**
Strongly Disagree	20.9	19.2	**20.5**	19.6	13.3	**18.0**
n=	*86*	*26*	***112***	*46*	*15*	***61***

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	**Members**			**Personal Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Limit the total amount of money a candidate can receive from all PACs combined						
Strongly Agree	38.0%	10.2%	**25.9**	29.7%	20.8%	**26.2%**
Somewhat Agree	38.5	22.4	**31.3**	51.4	12.5	**36.1**
No Opinion	1.5	8.2	**4.4**	0	0	**0**
Somewhat Disagree	12.6	24.5	**17.9**	16.2	25.0	**19.7**
Strongly Disagree	9.4	34.7	**20.5**	2.7	41.7	**18.0**
n =	*63*	*49*	*112*	*37*	*24*	*61*

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Provide an overall campaign spending limit and provide for a system of partial public financing						
Strongly Agree	29.2%	34.6%	**31.0%**	41.3%	53.3%	**44.3%**
Somewhat Agree	19..	26.9	**21.2**	6.5	26.7	**11.5**
No Opinion	4.6	7.7	**5.3**	10.9	-	**8.1**
Somewhat Disagree	11.5	7.7	**10.6**	15.2	13.3	**14.8**
Strongly Disagree	34.5	23.1	**31.9**	26.1	6.7	**21.3**
n=	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	**Members**			**Personal Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Provide an overall campaign spending limit and provide for a system of partial public financing						
Strongly Agree	51.6%	4.1%	**31.0%**	62.2%	16.7%	**44.3%**
Somewhat Agree	23.4	18.4	**21.2**	10.8	12.5	**11.5**
No Opinion	6.3	4.1	**5.3**	10.8	4.1	**8.1**
Somewhat Disagree	10.9	10.1	**10.6**	13.5	16.7	**14.8**
Strongly Disagree	7.8	63.3	**31.9**	2.7	50.0	**21.3**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	**Members** House	 Senate	 **Total**	**Personal Staff** House	 Senate	 **Total**
Abolish all federal limits on campaign contributions, while maintaining disclosure requirements						
Strongly Agree	4.6%	15.4%	**7.1%**	0%	6.7%	**1.6%**
Somewhat Agree	13.8	15.4	**14.2**	13.0	-	**9.8**
No Opinion	4.6	-	**3.4**	2.2	6.7	**3.3**
Somewhat Disagree	20.7	15.4	**19.5**	28.3	13.3	**24.6**
Strongly Disagree	56.3	53.8	**55.8**	56.5	73.3	**60.7**
n=	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff		
Members and Personal Staff Only	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Abolish all federal limits on campaign contributions, while maintaining disclosure requirements						
Strongly Agree	0%	16.3%	**7.1%**	0%	4.2%	**1.6%**
Somewhat Agree	9.4	20.4	**14.2**	2.7	20.8	**9.8**
No Opinion	1.5	6.2	**3.4**	5.4	-	**3.3**
Somewhat Disagree	17.2	22.4	**19.5**	24.3	25.0	**24.6**
Strongly Disagree	71.9	34.7	**55.8**	67.6	50.0	**60.7**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members House	Senate	Total	Personal Staff House	Senate	Total
Create a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes						
Strongly Agree	23.3%	38.5%	**26.8%**	15.2%	33.3%	**19.8%**
Somewhat Agree	36.0	30.8	**34.8**	30.4	20.0	**27.9**
No Opinion	13.9	3.8	**11.6**	20.0	20.0	**18.0**
Somewhat Disagree	17.4	15.4	**17.0**	6.7	6.7	**14.8**
Strongly Disagree	9.4	11.5	**9.8**	20.0	20.0	**19.8**
n=	*86*	*26*	*112*	*15*	*15*	**61**

How Do You Feel About The Following Campaign Finance Reform Proposals? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Create a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes						
Strongly Agree	34.9%	16.4%	**26.8%**	24.3%	12.5%	**19.8%**
Somewhat Agree	31.7	38.8	**34.8**	24.3	33.3	**27.9**
No Opinion	11.2	12.2	**11.6**	18.9	16.7	**18.7**
Somewhat Disagree	14.3	20.4	**17.0**	13.6	16.7	**14.8**
Strongly Disagree	7.9	12.2	**9.8**	18.9	20.7	**19.8**
n=	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***

4.2 Campaign Finance Proposals Most and Least Favored

Because the various campaign finance reform proposals were so diverse, the Center followed up by asking members to take a second look at the list and then indicate which proposals they most and least liked. In the "most liked" category, a 31.9 percent plurality of members said they favored partial public financing, and soft money disclosure ran second with 22.1 percent. In the "least liked" category the leading answer was abolishing contribution limits, opposed by 46.9 percent, while public financing was second as the "least favored" choice of members, cited by 25.7 percent.

But again these answers were sharply divided among partisan lines. Public financing was the leading "most liked" answer among Democrats, at 51.6 percent. But public financing was the leading "least liked" answer among 49 percent of Republican members. Only 6.1 percent of Republicans said public financing was their "most liked" option.

Removing all contribution limits and relying solely on public disclosure, was the least liked proposal of 65.5 percent of Democratic members and 22.4 percent of Republican members. Most members who selected this "least liked" proposal suggested that removing contribution limits could lead to more scandal. "Disclosure by itself is not adequate," said a House Democrat. "Removing limits will only bring us back to the 'bad old days' before Watergate."

When asked to explain their answers, many Republicans said they objected to public financing because it uses government funds, often saying that, "taxpayers should not pay for elections." One Republican Representative went further and claimed public financing would increase election costs and make elections more muddled because "every nut case from the LaRouche types on down would get government money just for being on the ballot."

Among Democrats, many said they really supported public financing because it would limit campaign costs. One Democratic Representative was more resigned to, rather than supportive of, public financing. "If public financing is the only way [we can control campaign costs] short of a constitutional amendment," he said, "then I'll support it." A few other Democrats indicated that limiting spending might be accomplished by other ways than public financing, such as voluntary spending limits in exchange for reduced rates for television broadcasting.

Which Campaign Finance Proposal Do You Most Support?
(by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Provide an overall campaign spending limit and provide for a system of partial public financing	32.2%	30.8%	**31.9%**	37.0%	53.3%	**41.0%**
Require disclosure of all contributions and expenditures to accounts held by the national partis, including so-called "soft-monty" accounts that raise funds from corporations, labor unions and other sources that may not contribute directly to federal campaigns	21.8	23.1	**22.1**	17.4	6.7	**14.8**
Create a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes	12.6	7.7	**11.5**	10.9	6.7	**9.8**
Require radio and television stations to provide a certain amount of free time to candidates	6.9	7.7	**7.1**	8.7	6.7	**8.2**
Decrease the amount a PAC may give to a candidate, but raise the amount an individual may contribute	6.9	7.7	**7.1**	4.3	-	**3.3**
Limit the total amount of money a candidate can receive from all PACs combined	4.6	0	**3.5**	8.7	13.3	**9.8**
Abolish all federal limits on campaign contributions, while maintaining disclosure requirements	3.4	3.8	**3.5**	4.3	6.7	**4.9**
Raise the total amounts national parties may spend on or contribute to House and Senate races	2.3	15.4	**5.3**	6.5	6.7	**6.6**
Other/None	9.2	3.8	**8.0**	2.2	-	**1.6**
n=	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***

Which Campaign Finance Proposal Do You Most Support? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Provide an overall campaign spending limit and provide for a system of partial public financing	51.6%	6.1%	**31.9%**	56.8%	16.7%	**41.[illegible]%**
Require disclosure of all contributions and expenditures to accounts held by the national partis, including so-called "soft-money" accounts that raise funds from corporations, labor unions and other sources that may not contribute directly to federal campaigns	18.8	26.5	**21.1**	8.1	25.0	**14.8**
Create a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes	12.5	10.2	**11.5**	10.8	8.3	**9.8**
Require radio and television stations to provide a certain amount of free time to candidates	6.3	-	**3.5**	5.4	4.2	**4.9**
Decrease the amount a PAC may give to a candidate, but raise the amount an individual may contribute	3.1	12.2	**7.1**	5.4	12.5	**8.2**
Limit the total amount of money a candidate can receive from all PACs combined	3.1	4.1	**3.5**	8.1	12.5	**9.8**
Abolish all federal limits on campaign contributions, while maintaining disclosure requirements	-	16.3	**7.1**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**
Raise the total amounts national parties may spend on or contribute to House and Senate races	-	12.2	**5.3**	2.7	12.5	**6.6**
Other/None	9	12.2	**8.0**	0	4.2	**1.6**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***

Which Campaign Finance Proposal Do You Least Support? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Abolish all federal limits on campaign contributions, while maintaining disclosure requirements	44.8%	53.8%	46.9%	58.7%	73.3%	62.3%
Provide an overall campaign spending limit and provide for a system of partial public financing	26.4	23.1	25.7	19.6	6.7	16.4
Decrease the amount a PAC may give to a candidate, but raise the amount an individual may contribute	4.6	7.7	5.3	4.3	-	3.3
Create a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes	4.6	-	3.5	4.3	-	3.3
Raise the total amounts national parties may spend on or contribute to House and Senate races	3.4	7.7	4.4	8.7	13.3	9.8
Limit the total amount of money a candidate can receive from all PACs combined	2.3	3.8	2.7	2.2	6.7	3.3
Require radio and television stations to provide a certain amount of free time to candidates	1.1	3.8	1.8	2.2	-	1.6
Other/None	12.6	-	9.7	-	-	-
n =	*87*	*26*	*113*	*46*	*15*	*61*

Which Campaign Finance Proposal Do You Least Support? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members Democratic	Members Republican	Members Total	Personal Staff Democratic	Personal Staff Republican	Personal Staff Total
Abolish all federal limits on campaign contributions, while maintaining public disclosure requirements	65.6%	22.4%	**46.9%**	75.7%	41.7%	**3.3%**
Provide an overall campaign spending limit and provide for a system of partial public financing	7.8	49.0	**25.7**	2.7	37.5	**16.4**
Decrease the amount a PAC may give to a candidate, but raise the amount an individual may contribute	6.3	4.1	**5.3**	-	8.3	**3.3**
Create a commission to study the campaign finance system and recommend changes	6.3	2.0	**4.4**	10.8	8.3	**9.8**
Raise the total amounts national parties may spend on or contribute to House and Senate races	3.1	-	**1.8**	2.7	-	**1.6**
Limit the total amount of money a candidate can receive from all PACs combined	1.6	6.1	**3.5**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**
Require radio and television stations to provide a certain amount of free time to candidates	-	6.1	**2.7**	5.4	-	**3.3**
Other/None	9.4	10.2	**9.7**	-	-	-
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***

4.3 Salaries

"As far as salary goes, I'd like to be paid as much as a bench player for the New York Giants football team." --a Republican Representative

Because the Center's interviews took place during a hotly disputed pay raise debate, many members were sensitive to the salary questions. The controversy began in December 1986, when the Commission on Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Salaries recommended substantial salary increases. The Commission was created as way to avoid a controversy on pay raises, but ironically, the ensuing fight over the pay raises proved to be one of the bitterest in memory.

The Commission's December recommendations called for an increase in congressional salaries from $77,400, with honoraria allowed, to $135,000 without honoraria--an increase of 74.4 percent. The Reagan administration balked at the size of that increase and recommended a more modest increase, to $89,500.

But even this smaller increase proved controversial among members. Several activist groups and members attacked it as unwarranted. Opposition to the increase cut sharply across partisan lines, to the point where conservative organizations, liberal activist Ralph Nader, and a few members of Congress joined forces in a court case to block the pay increases.

Within Congress, pay increase supporters devised a strategy to allow the raise to take affect automatically, without a vote by the members. Under the legislation creating the Commission, Congress had to act by February 3, 1987, or the Reagan recommendations would take effect automatically. House and Senate leaders thought they had agreed on a strategy to obtain the pay raise. This strategy would allow the Senate to officially reject the increase, while the House would not act on the legislation before the February 3 deadline, enabling the pay increases to take place automatically. However, pay raise opponents in the Senate managed to undercut their Senate leadership by attaching the pay hike legislation as a nongermane amendment to a recently passed House bill providing $50 million to the homeless--a bill that pay raise opponents believed would be voted on by the House before the February 3 deadline.

House leaders were angry at the Senate leaders for failing to deliver on their pay raise agreement. However, House leaders stuck to the original plan by scheduling a vote on the amended homeless aid bill for February 4. This allowed the House to both pass the homeless bill and reject the pay increase amendment. But because the House failed to act by February 3, the pay raise took affect by default. The tactics used to secure the raise left a bitter feeling among many members, prompting John Glenn (D-OH), a pay raise supporter to say Congress found a way to "say no and take the dough."

These bitter feelings were evident throughout the Center's interviews. Many members said the whole issue was still too sensitive. Other members were still extremely upset. One Senate Republican almost shouted at an interviewer, "[If the Secretary of the Senate] tries to make me take the money, I'll sue--they can't make me take it." A supporter of pay increases in the House complained that many of the members who voted against the pay raise were "millionaires. And a millionaire voting against an increase is trying to get some cheap votes." A House Democrat said that any pay increase should be decided by a recorded vote, but if an increase passes, "anyone who felt strongly enough to vote against an increase should not get it."

Despite the controversy over the increase, a majority of members thought the work of a member of Congress was worth more than the current salary of $89,000. Overall, 51.7 suggested salary figures ranging from $90,000 to over $130,000. Only 25.5 percent of members surveyed favored salaries in the $75,000 to $89,000 range. Another 15 percent of members responded with "no opinion" or "don't know," while 2.5 percent gave vague answers like "enough to live on." Another

5.3 percent of members advocated some kind of "comparable worth" formula.

Among the 51.7 percent favoring higher salaries were 20.2 percent who favored a salary in the $90,000 to $100,000 range, with many saying they favored $99,000 as a salary close to but not exceeding $100,000. Another 18.4 percent of members favored salaries in the $101,000 to $129,000 range, while 13.2 percent favored salaries of $130,000 or more.

A little less than two percent of the members said the current salary system did not take into account the differing needs of members maintaining homes in Washington and their home states. These members suggested housing allowances to defray the costs of maintaining two houses. One Republican Representative complained that the salary structure does not recognize merit or seniority, so a freshman member makes the same salary as the most senior member of Congress. This Representative, in his early forties, said, "There is no way I should be paid as much as [Appropriations Chairman Jamie] Whitten--he's been in Congress longer than I have been alive [and deserves a higher salary]."

Regardless of what the salary is, a majority of members believed pay should be set on a straight up-or-down majority vote by both chambers. Almost 56 percent favored voting on the salary, with 33.1 percent favoring a commission or some other mechanism for setting salaries, another 7.2 percent had no opinion, and the remaining respondents favored either a comparable worth scheme or some other formula to set salaries.

What Do You Think is a Reasonable Salary for Members of Congress? (by Party and Chamber)

Members Only	Members				
	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
$75,000 to $89,000	6.1%	4.6%	6.9%	0%	**5.3%**
$90,000 to $100,000	18.5	22.4	24.1	7.4	**20.1**
$101,000 to $129,000	20.0	16.3	18.4	18.5	**18.4**
$130,000 and up	12.3	14.3	12.6	14.8	**13.2**
The old salary was fine	4.6	6.1	5.7	3.7	**5.3**
The present salary is fine	13.8	16.3	16.1	11.1	**14.9**
Members should make "enough to live on"	3.1	2.0	2.3	3.7	**2.6**
Salary should be tied to wages for comparable work	6.2	4.1	4.6	7.4	**3.5**
Other/Don't Know	15.4	14.3	9.2	33.3	**14.9**
n=	*65*	*49*	*87*	*27*	***114***

How Should Congressional Salaries Be Set?
(by Party and Chamber)

Members Only	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Commision should set a salary but members must vote on Commission recomendation	31.7%	22.9%	29.1%	24.0%	**27.9%**
Commision alone should set salary	17.5	12.5	18.6	4.0	**15.3**
Should be set by some organization outside of Congress	12.7	16.7	14.0	8.0	**12.6**
Vote as now	11.1	14.6	12.8	24.0	**15.3**
Vote but delay implementation of salary until the next session of Congress	9.5	22.9	7.0	-	**5.4**
COLA formula	6.3	4.2	4.7	16.0	**7.2**
Other	1.6	2.1	1.2	4.0	**1.8**
Don't know	9.5	4.2	12.8	20.0	**14.4**
n =	*63*	*48*	*86*	*25*	***111***

Have Salaries Been a Problem in Hiring Staff? (by Chamber)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Yes	21.7%	26.7%	**23.0%**	39.3%	52.0%	**45.3%**
No	60.9	46.6	**57.4**	53.6	48.0	**50.9**
Salaries a problem for retaining staff	17.4	26.7	**19.6**	7.1	-	**3.8**
n =	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

Have Salaries Been a Problem in Hiring Staff? (by Party)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Yes	16.2%	33.3%	**23.0%**	48.1%	42.3%	**45.3%**
No	51.4	66.7	**57.4**	48.1	53.8	**50.9**
Salaries a problem for retaining staff	32.4	-	**19.6**	3.8	3.9	**3.8**
n =	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Please Explain Why Salaries Have/Have Not a Problem in Hiring Staff (by Chamber)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
"The salary structure in this office is based on unique circumstances or reasons"	47.4%	30.8%	**43.1%**	19.2%	22.7%	**20.8%**
Rewards of service are also a form of compensation	31.6	38.5	**33.3**	26.9	36.4	**31.3**
The pay is fine	23.7	38.5	**27.5**	26.9	22.7	**25.0**
Salaries just aren't competitive with private sector or the executive branch	15.8	7.7	**13.7**	46.2	36.4	**41.7**
"You work on Capitol Hill to gain experience for a better job"	13.2	7.7	**11.8**	22.7	15.4	**18.8**
Salaries are no problem for hiring, but are a problem for retaining staff	2.6	23.1	**7.8**	11.5	9.1	**10.4**
Salaries are poor, working conditions are bad, no job security, etc.	5.3	-	**3.9**	3.8	4.5	**4.2**
"Salaries are always a problem when you're in the minority party"	-	-	**-**	-	4.5	**2.1**
Other/No opinion	-	-	**-**	3.8	13.6	**8.3**
n =	*38*	*13*	***51***	*26*	*22*	***48***

Please Explain Why Salaries Have/Have Not a Problem in Hiring Staff (by Party)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
'The salary structure in this office is based on unique circumstances or reasons"	33.3%	57.1%	**43.1%**	20.0%	21.7%	**20.8%**
Rewards of service are also a form of compensation	40.0	23.8	**33.3**	24.0	39.1	**31.3**
The pay is fine	23.3	33.3	**27.5**	20.0	30.4	**25.0**
Salaries just aren't competitive with private sector or the executive branch	13.3	14.3	**13.7**	48.0	34.8	**41.7**
"You work on Capitol Hill to gain experience for a better job"	10.0	14.3	**11.8**	16.0	4.3	**18.8**
Salaries are no problem for hiring, but are a problem for retaining staff	13.3	- -	**7.8**	11.5	9.1	**10.4**
Salaries are poor, working conditions are bad, no job security, etc.	3.3	4.8	**3.9**	8.0	-	**4.2**
"Salaries are always a problem when you're in the minority party"	-	-	**-**	-	4.0	**2.1**
Other/No opinion	-	-	**-**	8.7	8.0	**8.3**
n =	*30*	*21*	***51***	*23*	*25*	***48***

4.4 Honoraria

Current rules allow Senators to accept up to 40 percent and Representatives up to 30 percent of their salaries in honoraria. At 1987 salary levels, a Senator can earn up to $35,800 a year and a Representative up to $26,850 a year in honoraria. Most honoraria are contributed to members for their personal use and are given as speaker's fees, payment for articles, or other payments in connection with official duties. Honoraria have been controversial because many of the groups that give this money also lobby on issues before Congress.

When the Center asked members if they would accept higher salaries in exchange for a ban on honoraria, 67 percent said yes, 25 percent said no, and 8 percent gave other answers. This last category included a handful of members who wanted to end honoraria without raising salaries. "I think we should get rid of them," said a House Democrat. "I never 'max out' [on honoraria], but you have to spend so much time chasing it; time you can better spend on more important work." One House member questioned whether many members actually earn the honoraria they are paid. "[In most cases] members are getting $2,000 for a speech their staff wrote," he said,"and remember, [these staffers] are supposed to be working in the public interest."

Most of the minority of members who opposed banning honoraria believed it did not raise any serious ethical problems. One Republican Representative pointed out that members of Congress are not the only ones who can accept honoraria. "I know [many newspaper reporters] can take honoraria and in larger amounts than we can. Aren't [newspaper reporters] as influenced by honoraria as members? I don't see them writing stories about reporters taking money, though."

But an overwhelming majority of members said they would ban honoraria, especially if salaries were raised. "We should definitely get rid of honoraria," said a House Democrat, "and higher salaries are a good *quid pro quo*." Said a Democratic Senator, "I'm in a position where I don't have to take honoraria. I sympathize with those that do, but I wish they didn't have to ... the money goes directly into your pocket and sticks in your mind as well." Another Democratic Senator said, "[Honoraria are] too unseemly in the public's mind and they add to the corrosion, the negative feelings about Congress."

Would You Favor a Ban on Outside Honoraria in Exchange for a Higher Salary? (by Party and Chamber)

Members Only	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Yes	74.6%	57.1%	65.1%	73.1%	**67.0%**
No	20.6	30.6	24.4	26.9	**25.0**
Somewhat agree/Pay increase not necessary for a ban	3.2	2.0	3.5	-	**2.6**
Depends on other factors	1.6	10.3	7.0	-	**5.4**
n =	*63*	*49*	*86*	*26*	*112*

4.5 Paid Travel and Lobbying by Former Members and Staff

Under the ethics rules of the House and Senate, all gifts of travel, lodging, entertainment and food totaling more than $250 from any one source must be disclosed. Frequently, travel gifts are given to members by groups that lobby Congress. When asked if they favored additional restrictions on travel paid for by groups that lobby Congress, 54.9 percent of members said no, 31.4 percent said yes, 3.9 percent said they somewhat agreed, and 9.8 percent said they had no opinion or that their decision would depend on other factors.

The rules on lobbying by former members and staff vary between chambers. Former House members and staff are not prevented from lobbying Congress once they leave the Hill. Former Senators and Senate staff are restricted from lobbying their former committees for a two-year period. When asked if they would favor restrictions ones--in the case of the Senate, additional--on former members lobbying, 63.3 percent said no, 30.3 percent said yes, 4.6 percent said it depended and 1.8 percent said they somewhat agreed.

Most members felt the current lobbying disclosure requirements were adequate protection against abuses. Many members also provided some interesting insights on lobbying. "I actually pity them," said a Democratic Senator, "seeing [former members] trying to act like they are still legislators. If I see one down the hall, I turn and walk away." A Democratic Representative said, "You don't get elected to Congress so you can be a lobbyist--you become a former member lobbyist by losing. Who is going to take the advice of a loser?"

When personal staff were asked if there should be restrictions on former senior staff lobbying, 59 percent of the respondents said no, 29.5 percent said yes, and 11.5 percent said it depended. There were strong differences of opinion between House and Senate staff, with 73.4 percent of Senate personal staff supporting additional restrictions and 73.9 percent of House staff opposing any restrictions. Overall, committee staff also opposed restrictions on staff lobbying by a plurality of 49 percent. Among chambers, 60.7 percent of House committee staff opposed any lobbying restrictions, while Senate committee staff were more ambivalent, with 20 percent wanting more lobbying restrictions for Senate staff, 36 percent saying no additional restrictions were needed, and 44 percent saying they had no opinion or that their support for additional restrictions would depend on other factors.

Would You Favor Additional Restrictions on Free Trips Paid for by Groups that Lobby Congress?
(by Party and Chamber)

Members Only	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Yes	33.9%	28.3%	29.5%	37.5%	**31.4%**
No	55.4	54.3	53.8	58.3	**54.9**
Somewhat agree	3.6	4.4	5.1	-	**3.9**
Depends on other circumstances	7.1	13.0	11.6	4.2	**9.8**
n=	*56*	*46*	*78*	*24*	***102***

Why do You Favor/Oppose Additional Restrictions on Free Trips Paid for by Groups that Lobby Congress?
(by Party and Chamber)

Members Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Disclosure is adequate to prevent abuses	50.0%	66.7%	58.1%	60.0%	**58.5%**
Disclosure provides voters with enough information to decide if trips were approprate	15.0	4.8	6.5	20.0	**9.8**
Trips help members obtain information	5.0	14.3	9.7	10.0	**9.8**
Trips provide members with family time	10.0	4.8	9.7	-	**7.3**
Trips provide members an opportunity to see the districts/states of other members	10.0	4.8	6.5	10.0	**7.3**
Trips help members return to home state/district	5.0	-	3.2	-	**2.4**
Addtional restrictions will encourage abuses	5.0	-	2.4	3.2	**2.4**
Public perception of trips is negative	-	4.8	3.2	-	**2.4**
n=	*56*	*46*	*78*	*24*	***102***

Would You Favor Restrictions on Former Members Lobbying Congress? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Yes	30.6%	29.8%	**30.3%**	51.4%	16.7%	**37.7%**	25.9%	23.1%	**24.5%**
Somewhat agree	1.7	2.1	**1.8**	-	-	**-**	-	-	**-**
Depends	4.8	4.3	**4.6**	10.8	8.3	**9.8**	7.4	11.6	**9.4**
Somewhat disagree	–	–	**–**	–	–	**–**	3.7	-	**1.9**
No	62.9	63.8	**63.3**	35.1	70.8	**49.2**	63.0	61.5	**62.3**
No opinion	–	–	**–**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	-	3.8	**1.9**
n=	*62*	*47*	***109***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Would You Favor restrictions on Former Members Lobbying Congress?
(By Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Yes -	26.5%	42.3%	**30.3%**	23.9%	80.0%	**37.7%**	17.9%	32.0%	**24.5%**
Somewhat agree	2.4	-	**1.8**	-	-	**-**	-	-	**-**
Depends	4.8	3.9	**4.6**	13.0	-	**9.8**	14.2	4.0	**9.4**
Somewhat disagree	–	–	**–**	–	–	**–**	-	4.0	**1.9**
No	66.3	53.8	**63.3**	60.9	13.3	**49.2**	67.9	56.0	**62.3**
No opinion	–	–	**–**	2.2	6.7	**3.3**	-	4.0	**1.9**
n=	*83*	*26*	***109***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

If You Favor Restrictions on Former Members Lobbying Congress, What Kind of Restrictions Do You Support?
(by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Members should not lobby for a brief period following their retirement	10.3%	18.5%	**12.3%**	17.4%	60.0%	**27.9%**	14.3%	12.0%	**13.2%**
Former members who are lobbyists should not have floor privileges	6.9	3.7	**6.1**	6.5	13.3	**8.2**	14.3	4.0	**9.4**
Former members should be subject to the same restrictions as former administration officials	6.9	3.7	**6.1**	-	-	-	3.6	-	**1.9**
Former members who are lobbyists should not have privileges to any Members-only locations on the Hill	1.1	-	**0.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Former members should be prevented from lobbying former committees or on bills where they had a previous interest	1.1	-	**0.9**	4.3	-	**3.3**	-	-	-
Present rules are fine	-	3.7	**0.9**	2.2	-	**1.6**	3.6	20.0	**11.3**
Disclosure is adequate projection against abuses	-	-	-	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	4.0	**1.9**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

If You Favor Restrictions on Former Members Lobbying Congress, What Kind of Restrictions Do You Support?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Members should not lobby for a brief period following their retirement	15.4%	8.2%	**12.3%**	40.5%	8.3%	**27.9%**	11.1%	15.4%	**13.2%**
Former members who are lobbyists should not have floor privileges	7.7	4.1	**6.1**	10.8	4.2	**8.2**	11.1	7.7	**9.4**
Former members should be subject to the same restrictions as former administration officials	3.1	10.2	**6.1**	-	-	-	3.7	-	**1.9**
Former members who are lobbyists should not have privileges to any Members-only locations the Hill	1.5	-	**0.9**	-	-	-	-	-	-
Former members should be prevented from lobbying former committees or on bills where they had a previous interest	-	2.0	**0.9**	5.4	-	**3.3**	-	-	-
Present rules are fine	-	2.0	**0.9**	-	4.2	**1.6**	18.5	3.8	**11.3**
Disclosure is adequate projection against abuses	-	-	-	-	4.2	**1.6**	-	3.8	**1.9**
n=	*65*	*49*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Why Do you Favor or Oppose Restrictions on Former Members Lobbying Congress? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
Such restrictions are not fair or constitutional	41.0%	20.0%	**36.7%**	24.1%	7.7%	**19.0%**	28.6%	21.5%	**25.7%**
Lobbying practices are not abusive	23.1	20.0	**22.4**	20.7	7.7	**16.6**	33.3	14.3	**25.7**
Restrictions are not effective	15.4	30.0	**18.4**	24.1	15.4	**21.4**	4.8	21.5	**11.4**
Former members lobbying is degrading/shouldn't profit from public service	2.6	30.0	**8.2**	6.9	38.4	**16.7**	-	7.1	**2.9**
Former members are a valuable resource in policy debate	7.7	-	**6.2**	17.3	7.7	**14.3**	14.3	7.1	**11.4**
Public perception of lobbying is negative	5.0	-	**4.1**	-	-	-	4.7	14.3	**8.6**
Restrictions are unworkable	2.6	-	**2.0**	6.9	-	**4.8**	14.3	7.1	**11.4**
Disclosure is adequate protection against abuses	2.6	-	**2.0**	7.7	-	**2.4**	7.1	-	**2.9**
There is too much legislation on lobbying already	-	-	-	-	15.4	**4.8**	-	-	-
n=	*10*	*39*	*49*	*29*	*13*	*42*	*14*	*21*	*35*

Why Do you Favor or Oppose Restrictions on Former Members Lobbying Congress? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Such restrictions are not fair or constitutional	32.1%	42.9%	**36.7%**	12.5%	27.8%	**19.0%**	22.1%	29.4%	**25.7%**
Lobbying practices are not abusive	21.4	23.8	**22.4**	11.1	20.8	**16.6**	22.1	29.4	**25.7**
Restrictions are not effective	25.0	9.5	**18.4**	25.0	16.7	**21.4**	16.7	5.9	**11.4**
Former members lobbying is degrading/shouldn't profit from public service	7.1	9.5	**8.2**	20.8	11.1	**16.7**	5.6	-	**2.9**
Former members are a valuable resource in policy debate	3.6	9.5	**6.2**	8.3	22.2	**14.3**	16.7	5.9	**11.4**
Public perception of lobbying is negative	3.6	4.8	**4.1**	-	-	**-**	5.6	11.1	**8.6**
Restrictions are unworkable	3.6	-	**2.0**	8.3	-	**4.8**	5.6	17.6	**11.4**
Disclosure is adequate protection against abuses	3.6	-	**2.0**	-	5.6	**2.4**	5.6	-	**2.9**
There is too much legislation on lobbying already	-	-	**-**	4.3	5.5	**4.8**	-	-	**-**
n=	*21*	*28*	***49***	*24*	*18*	***42***	*17*	*18*	***35***

Do You Favor Restrictions on Former Staff Lobbying Congress? (by Chamber)

Personal and Committee Staff	**Personal Staff** House	Senate	**Total**	**Committee Staff** House	Senate	**Total**
Yes	15.2%	73.4%	**29.5%**	21.4%	20.0%	**20.8%**
No	73.9	13.3	**59.0**	60.7	36.0	**49.0**
Depends	10.9	13.3	**11.5**	17.9	44.0	**30.2**
n=	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

Do You Favor Restrictions on Former Staff Lobbying Congress? (by Party)

Personal and Committee Staff	Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Yes	37.8%	16.7%	**29.5%**	18.5%	23.1%	**20.8%**
No	54.1	66.6	**59.0**	55.6	42.3	**49.0**
Depends	8.1	16.7	**11.5**	25.9	34.6	**30.2**
n=	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Why Do You Favor/Oppose Restrictions on Former Staff Lobbying? (by Chamber)

Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Restrictions are unnecessary, lobbying practices are not abusive	25.0%	25.8%	**25.6%**	15.8%	33.3%	**22.6%**
Former staff are a valuable resource in the policy debate	25.8	-	**18.6**	26.3	-	**29.0**
Such restrictions are unfair or unconstitutional	19.4	8.3	**16.3**	18.8	13.3	**16.1**
It is degrading to be a lobbyists/staff shouldn't profit from public service	6.5	41.7	**16.3**	-	-	**-**
Restrictions are not effective	9.7	16.7	**11.6**	5.3	16.7	**9.7**
There is too much legislation on lobbying already	3.2	8.3	**4.7**	-	16.7	**6.5**
Restrictions are unworkable	3.2	-	**2.3**	10.5	8.3	**9.7**
Public perception of lobbyists is bad	3.2	-	**2.3**	10.5	-	**6.5**
Disclosure is adequate to prevent abuses	3.2	-	**2.3**	-	-	**-**
n =	*31*	*12*	***43***	*19*	*12*	***31***

Why Do You Favor/Oppose Restrictions on Former Staff Lobbying? (by Party)

Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Restrictions are unnecessary, lobbying practices are not abusive	26.9%	23.5%	**25.6%**	31.3%	13.3%	**22.6%**
Former staff are a valuable resource in the policy debate	19.2	17.6	**18.6**	37.5	20.0	**29.0**
Such restrictions are unfair or unconstitutional	7.7	29.4	**16.3**	18.8	13.3	**16.1**
It is degrading to be a lobbyists/staff shouldn't profit from public service	19.2	11.8	**16.3**	-	-	-
Restrictions are not effective	15.4	5.9	**11.6**	6.3	13.3	**9.7**
There is too much legislation on lobbying already	3.8	5.9	**4.7**	6.3	6.7	**6.5**
Restrictions are unworkable	-	5.9	**2.3**	-	20.0	**9.7**
Public perception of lobbyists is bad	3.8	-	**2.3**	-	13.3	**6.5**
Disclosure is adequate to prevent abuses	3.8	-	**2.3**	-	-	
n =	*26*	*17*	***43***	*15*	*16*	***31***

What Type of Restrictions Should There be on Former Staff Lobbying? (by Chamber)

Staff Only	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
Former staff should be prevented from lobbying for a limited time period after leaving the Hill	6.5%	40.0%	**14.8%**	21.3%	16.0%	**18.9%**
Former staff should be prevented from lobbying on legislative interests they were directly involved in	2.2	6.7	**3.3**	3.6	8.0	**5.6**
Present rules are adequate	4.3	-	**3.3**	3.6	36.0	**18.9**
Former staff should be restricted from the floor	-	-	-	3.6	-	**1.9**
Former staff should have the same restrictions as former administration officials	-	-	-	3.6	-	**1.9**
Disclosure is adequate to prevent abuses	2.2	-	**1.6**	-	4.0	**1.9**
n =	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

What Type of Restrictions Should there be on Former Staff Lobbying? (by Party)

Staff Only	Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Former staff should be prevented from lobbying for a limited time period after leaving the Hill	21.6%	4.2%	**14.8%**	14.8%	23.1%	**18.9%**
Former staff should be prevented from lobbying on legislative interests they were directly involved in	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	3.7	7.7	**5.6**
Present rules are adequate	-	8.2	**3.3**	22.2	15.4	**18.9**
Former staff should be restricted from the floor	-	-	-	-	3.8	**1.9**
Former staff should have the same restrictions as former administration officials	-	-	-	3.7	-	**1.9**
Disclosure is adequate to prevent abuses	-	4.2	**1.6**	-	3.8	**1.9**
n =	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

5

The Press and Public Understanding of Congress

"I guess I'm old-fashioned, but I get all my news from print." --a Republican Representative

"I don't see television news as anything more than a picture-caption service. For the broadcast media, I find the coverage on National Public Radio to be far more complete." --a Democratic Representative

The importance of press coverage of Congress has long been recognized. As early as 1813, there were four full-time Capitol correspondents filing copy on Congress. The invention of the telegraph in 1837 enabled correspondents to file daily stories to distant papers, sparking an increase in the number of correspondents covering Congress. By 1857, the first House and Senate press galleries were opened in the newly constructed Capitol building. The invention of radio and television created new news markets and further increased the number of congressional correspondents. Today, there are some 4,100 newspaper, wire service, radio, and television reporters covering Congress.

New communications technologies also made direct coverage of Congress available to the public. In the 1920s, for example, there was live radio coverage of the congressional committee hearings investigating the "Teapot Dome" scandal, involving officials of President Warren Harding's administration. But this early direct coverage was infrequent during the 1920s and 1930s. In the 1940s, some House committees allowed television broadcasts of their hearings, but opposition by Speaker Sam Rayburn (D-TX) led to rules in 1952 that effectively restricted television coverage. These rules were changed in the early 1970s to enable more television coverage of House committee hearings. The Senate, in contrast, welcomed television coverage of its committees in the 1940s, leading to live coverage of memorable Senate hearings such as Senator Estes Kefauver's (D-TN) 1951 Crime Investigation Committee hearings on racketeering and organized crime, the Army-McCarthy hearings of 1954, and the Watergate investigation of 1973.

Direct broadcasts of House floor debates occurred in the late 1970s. In 1977, the House Select Committee on Congressional Operations recommended direct, unedited television broadcasts off of the House floor, and these broadcasts began in 1979. In 1978, the Senate experimented with direct radio broadcasts of the Panama Canal Treaty debate, but due to intense opposition on the part of a few Senators, no further radio and television broadcasts from the floor were made for the next eight years. By 1986, supporters of direct television broadcasts of Senate floor debates had enough votes to engage in a trial broadcast period that summer. After this test, Senators voted to make these broadcasts permanent.

One survey result that comes through clearly is that members and staff believe their local press and the network television news have done a poor job covering Congress. Opinions about the national print media were more mixed, members and personal staff believing these news organizations are doing a good job but a slight majority of committee staff believing they are not.

5.1 Reactions to Local Press Coverage

When members were asked for opinions of their local media, almost 60 percent said these news organizations were doing a poor job of providing adequate coverage of Congress to constituents. The reasons members gave for the poor coverage differed greatly. A Democratic Representative in a district consisting largely of rural towns commented that there was no real "local" television station or daily newspaper in his district. "Depending on where you are in my district," he said, "you can read one of three large daily newspapers from a nearby city--but not so nearby that they cover this area." Another Democratic Representative had the opposite problem: "The biggest circulation 'local' paper in my area happens to be The New York *Times*--a national paper that doesn't spend much space covering the state delegation." Other Representatives believe many of their local organizations rely too much on wire service material rather than seeking stories related to their districts. Another Democratic Representative thought the reporters from his local newspapers were good but that their editors back home did not run many of their stories.

While many Senators also criticized some of their local news organizations, many also commented that most local organizations do not have the resources to cover the complexities of Congress. One Republican Senator said that local news organizations in his state "either don't have the money to hire experienced people, or if the people they do hire are any good, they won't stay in [my state] very long. Also, many of these people just don't know Congress very well, so you have to take them step by step through everything. And as soon as you train someone new, they take off, so you have to start the process over again." After a pause, the Senator continued that "what's a real shame about this is that because some of these [local reporters] need our help to cover Congress, we might take advantage of them, to present the facts in such a way as to make us look good. I know I've been guilty of this occasionally."

Some members responded that the local press was giving the public all the information about Congress that it really wanted. Most members did believe improved congressional coverage at the local level was important. One Republican Senator who thought his state's local press was doing a good job covering Congress put the issue this way: "Improved local coverage is important because the local press is an alternative to what is said in the national press--they do have a different perspective on the issues."

Do Your State and Local Newspapers and Television Stations Provide Your Constituents with Enough Information about the Work of Congress?

(by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only	**Members**			**Personal Staff**		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
They have	32.2%	28.0%	**31.3%**	14.3%	41.3%	**35.0%**
They have not	56.3	64.0	**58.0**	85.7	52.2	**60.0**
Their performance is mixed	11.5	8.0	**10.7**	-	4.3	**3.3**
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	-	2.2	**1.7**
n=	*87*	*25*	***112***	*14*	*46*	***60***

Do Your State and Local Press Provide Your Constituents with Enough Information about the Work of Congress?
(by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only	Members			Personal Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
They have	30.2%	32.6%	31.3%	37.8%	30.4%	35.0%
They have not	55.6	61.2	58.0	59.5	60.9	60.0
Their performance is mixed	14.3	6.1	10.7	-	8.7	3.3
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	2.7	-	1.7
n=	*63*	*49*	*112*	*37*	*23*	*60*

Why Do You Feel Your State and Local Press Has or Has Not Covered Congress Well? (by Chamber)

Members and Personal Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total
The local press does/does not have enough resources	12.6%	30.4%	**16.4%**	13.0%	21.4%	**16.7%**
Focus is not on Congress but on the "big story," on controversy, on the executive branch, etc.	12.6	8.7	**11.8**	15.2	21.4	**15.0**
Depth of news coverage is good/poor	11.5	17.4	**12.7**	13.0	35.7	**18.3**
Coverage is too parochial/provincial	13.8	8.7	**12.7**	6.5	35.7	**13.3**
Congress is difficult to cover because it is so complex	8.0	21.7	**10.7**	10.9	14.3	**11.7**
Viewers/readers get all the news they really want	4.6	17.4	**7.3**	13.0	14.3	**13.3**
Quality of the reporters is good/poor	5.7	4.3	**5.5**	6.5	-	**5.0**
There is too much bias or editorializing in the press	4.6	-	**3.6**	6.5	-	**5.0**
Profits or ratings are the principal factors behind news coverage	2.3	-	**1.8**	2.2	-	**1.7**
Other	2.3	4.3	**2.7**	-	7.1	**1.7**
No opinion or respondent critiqued a particular news organization	41.4	26.1	**38.2**	34.8	-	**26.7**
n =	*87*	*23*	***110***	*46*	*14*	***60***

Why Do You Feel Your State and Local Press Has or Has Not Covered Congress Well? (by Party)

Members and Personal Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	**Members** Democrats	Republicans	**Total**	**Personal Staff** Democrats	Republicans	**Total**
The local press does/does not have enough resources	18.0%	14.3%	**16.4%**	16.2%	17.4%	**16.7%**
Focus is not on Congress but on the "big story" on controversy, on the executive branch, etc.	13.1	10.2	**11.8**	5.4	30.4	**15.0**
Depth of news coverage is good/poor	11.5	14.3	**12.7**	16.2	21.7	**18.3**
Coverage is too parochial/provincial	9.8	16.3	**12.7**	18.9	4.3	**13.3**
Congress is difficult to cover because it is so complex	8.2	14.3	**10.9**	8.1	17.4	**11.7**
Viewers/readers get all the news they really want	8.2	6.1	**7.3**	13.5	13.0	**13.3**
Quality of the reporters is good/poor	6.6	4.1	**5.5**	8.1	-	**5.0**
There is too much bias or editorializing in the press	4.9	2.0	**3.6**	2.7	8.7	**5.0**
Profits or ratings are the principal factors behind news coverage	3.3	-	**1.8**	-	4.3	**1.7**
Other	4.9	-	**2.7**	2.7	-	**1.7**
No opinion or respondent critiqued a particular news organization	39.3	36.7	**38.2**	24.3	30.4	**26.7**
n =	*61*	*49*	***110***	*37*	*23*	***60***

5.2 Reactions to the National Press Coverage

Members and most personal staff did believe that the national printed press, unlike their local press, was doing a good job. By "national" press, the Center meant organizations like the New York *Times*, Wall Street *Journal*, Washington *Post*, The Los Angeles *Times*, The Associated Press, and other leading papers and wire services. When asked if the national press was providing enough information to adequately inform the public about the work of Congress, the percentages of members and staff answering in the affirmative were usually in the low 60s to mid-70s--with the exception of Republican personal staff and committee staff.

When asked to elaborate on their answers, most members and staff chose to comment on the work of a specific news agency. Typical answers were comments like "We use [several national newspapers] to help organize our work on many issues," said a Republican legislative director to a senior member. Or as a Republican Senator said, "Among the finest organizations which many don't think of right away is The Associated Press. They have a large number of reporters filing dozens of stories each day on our work--and even they can't cover it all." Among Senators, 13 percent specifically praised the reporters for national newspapers and wire services. "Their work is outstanding," said a Democratic Senator. "If you wanted to assemble the best experts on Congress in one room, you should bring together [the reporters for the national press.]"

However, there were a few complaints among members. Among Senators, 21.7 percent said the focus of many stories on Congress was either on controversy or that coverage often emphasizes the executive. (Only 8 percent of House members said the same.) A roughly equal percentage of Senators and Representatives said the national press tended to have stories about worthwhile topics, but that depth in these stories was lacking. Also, about 12.2 percent of Republicans complained of bias in the national press, while only 4.6 percent of Democrats offered similar complaints.

Only 45.8 percent of Republican personal staffers believed the national press was doing a good job, 37.5 percent said they were doing a poor job and 12.2 percent said their performance varied. When asked to explain their answers, 43.3 percent of Republican personal staff either criticized a specific news organization or had no opinion. Another 26 percent said the national press is largely biased, while 17.4 percent thought the national press tended to focus too much on controversy, "megastories"--stories on a complex topic--or the executive branch.

Committee staff was far more critical of national press coverage, with a total of 52.8 percent saying the national press was not doing a good job, 39.6 percent saying they were, 5.7 percent saying coverage varied between organizations and 1.9 percent having no opinion. While a plurality of Senate committee staff--48 percent--thought the national press was doing a good job, a 60.7 percent majority of House committee staff thought they were not.

Do You Think the National Press Provides the Public with Enough Information on How Congress Works? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
It has	73.6%	64.0%	71.4%	60.9%	73.3%	63.9%	32.1%	48.0%	39.6%
It has not	24.1	32.0	25.9	30.4	26.7	29.5	60.7	44.0	52.8
Its performance is mixed	2.3	-	1.8	6.5	-	4.9	7.1	4.0	5.7
No Opinion	-	4.0	0.9	2.2	-	1.6	-	4.0	1.9
n =	*87*	*25*	*112*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

Do You Think the National Press Provides the Public with Enough Information on How Congress Works?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democrat	Republican	Total	Democrat	Republican	Total
It has	74.6%	67.3%	**71.4%**	75.7%	45.8%	**63.9%**	37.0%	42.3%	**39.6%**
It has not	23.8	28.6	**25.9**	24.3	37.5	**29.5**	59.2	46.1	**52.8**
Its performance is mixed	-	4.1	**1.8**	-	12.5	**4.9**	-	11.5	**5.7**
No Opinion/Don't Know	1.6	-	**0.9**	-	4.2	**1.6**	3.7	-	**1.9**
n=	*63*	*49*	*112*	*37*	*24*	*61*	*27*	*26*	*53*

Why Do You Feel the National Press Has or Has Not Covered Congress Well? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Depth of news coverage is good/poor	16.1%	17.4%	36.9%	11.1%	20.0%	13.3%	25.0%	40.0%	32.1%
Focus is not on Congress, but on the "big story," on controversy, on the executive branch, etc.	8.0	21.7	10.9	15.6	13.3	15.0	32.1	24.0	28.3
There is too much bias or editorializing in the press	10.3	4.3	9.1	15.6	6.7	13.3	17.9	12.0	15.1
The quality of reporters is good/poor	1.1	13.0	3.6	2.2	-	1.7	7.1	4.0	7.5
Profits are the principal factors behind news coverage	3.4	-	2.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
National press has good/poor resources	1.1	4.3	1.8	4.4	-	3.3	-	-	-
Congress is difficult to cover because it is so complex	1.1	-	0.9	4.4	-	3.3	7.1	4.0	5.7
Readers get all the news they really want	-	4.3	0.9	2.2	-	1.7	14.3	12.0	13.2
Other	5.7	4.3	5.5	6.7	5.5	4.4	5.0	-	1.9
No opinion or respondent critiqued a particular news organization	57.5	39.1	53.6	53.3	60.0	55.0	17.9	28.0	22.6
n=	*87*	*23*	*110*	*45*	*15*	*60*	*28*	*25*	*53*

Why Do You Feel the National Press Has or Has Not Covered Congress Well? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	**Members**			**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Depth of news coverage is good/poor	18.0%	14.3%	**36.9%**	18.9%	4.3%	**13.3%**	48.1%	15.4%	**32.1%**
Focus is not on Congress, but on the "big story," on controversy, on the executive branch, etc.	14.7	6.1	**10.9**	13.5	17.4	**15.0**	40.7	15.4	**28.3**
There is too much bias or editorializing in the press	6.6	12.2	**9.1**	5.4	26.1	**13.3**	7.4	23.1	**15.1**
The quality of reporters is good/poor	1.6	6.1	**3.6**	2.7	-	**1.7**	-	15.4	**7.5**
Profits are the principal factors behind news coverage	3.3	2.0	**2.7**	-	-	**-**	-	-	**-**
National press has good/poor resources	3.3	-	**1.8**	2.7	4.3	**3.3**	-	-	**-**
Congress is difficult to cover because it is so complex	-	2.0	**0.9**	-	8.7	**3.3**	7.4	3.8	**5.7**
Readers get all the news they really want	1.6	-	**0.9**	-	4.3	**1.7**	18.5	7.7	**13.2**
Other	6.6	4.1	**5.5**	5.4	4.3	**4.4**	-	3.8	**1.9**
No opinion or respondent critiqued a particular news organization	50.8	57.1	**53.6**	62.2	43.5	**55.0**	14.8	30.8	**22.6**
n=	*61*	*49*	***110***	*37*	*23*	***60***	*27*	*26*	***53***

5.3 Reactions to the Network Television News

There was universal agreement among respondents that the national network news coverage of Congress was not adequate to inform the public. Among members, 66.1 percent thought the networks were not doing a good job reporting the work of Congress. The number of personal and committee staff who said the networks were doing a poor job covering Congress was over 80 percent .

When interviewers followed up by asking why the respondents felt the way they did, the most frequent reason given was that the networks do not provide enough detailed coverage of events. The respondents who gave this answer at least once ranged from a third of all Representatives, to 70 percent of Democratic committee staffers. Another frequently expressed opinion was that the networks focus too much on controversy or scandal. That answer was given by 15.9 percent of members, 24.1 percent of personal staff, and 21.3 percent of committee staff. Once again, many Republicans mentioned bias in their answers. Among members, 24.5 percent of Republican respondents mentioned bias as opposed to 3.2 percent of Democrats. For personal staff, 29.2 percent of Republicans mentioned bias versus 5.4 percent of Democrats.

Many of the answers given by the respondents on network coverage were outspoken. "I don't think there is much reason to watch the news on television," said one Republican committee staff director in the House. "The only public affairs programs I watch on TV are the political 'food fight' shows--they can be fun." (When asked what a political "food fight" show was, the respondent said "programs like *Agronsky and Company* or *The McLaughlin Group* .") A Republican Senator said that he "didn't see that television coverage was all that informative--well, maybe it is useful to get a general sense of an issue or event. I mean, you can watch to find out the big stories, like if a nuclear reactor blew up in Milwaukee or something."

A Democratic Representative said the principal problems facing the networks in their congressional coverage are image and time. "Members are just talking heads," he said. "There are no strong visual images associated with Congress. Also, the coverage is so constricted. I once was interviewed [by a television crew] for 45 minutes and only two sentences were ever used on television."

Do You Think the Network Television News Provides the Public with Enough Information on How Congress Works?
(by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
It has	34.5%	20.0%	31.3%	6.5%	6.7%	6.6%	3.6%	8.0%	5.7%
It has not	63.2	76.0	66.1	80.4	93.3	83.6	89.3	84.0	86.8
Its performance is mixed	2.3	4.0	2.7	10.9	-	8.2	-	4.0	1.9
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	2.2	-	1.6	7.1	4.0	5.7
n =	*87*	*25*	*112*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*

Do You Think the Network Television News Provides the Public with Enough Information on How Congress Works?
(by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
It has	34.9%	26.5%	**31.1%**	8.1%	4.2%	**6.6%**	3.7%	37.7	**5.7%**
It has not	65.1	67.3	**66.1**	83.8	83.3	**83.6**	88.9	84.6	**86.8**
Its performance is mixed	-	6.1	**2.7**	5.4	12.5	**8.2**	-	3.8	**1.9**
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	2.7	-	**1.6**	7.4	3.8	**5.7**
n=	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Why Do You Feel the Network Television News Has or Has Not Covered Congress Well? (by Chamber)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
Depth of news coverage is good/poor	32.6%	52.0%	**36.9%**	63.0%	53.3%	**60.7%**	60.7%	64.0%	**62.3%**
Focus is not on Congress, but on the "big story," on controversy, on the executive branch, etc.	16.3	24.0	**18.0**	30.4	40.0	**32.8**	35.7	24.0	**30.2**
There is too much bias or editorializing in the press	16.3	-	**12.6**	13.0	20.0	**14.8**	7.1	8.0	**7.5**
Profits or ratings are the principal factors behind news coverage	8.1	8.1	**7.2**	2.2	6.7	**3.3**	3.6	4.0	**3.8**
Congress is difficult to cover because it is so complex	2.3	-	**1.8**	4.3	20.0	**8.2**	10.7	4.0	**7.5**
The quality of reporters is good/poor	-	-	-	2.2	-	**1.6**	3.6	-	**1.9**
Viewers get all the news they really want	1.2	4.0	**1.8**	2.2	-	**1.6**	14.3	4.0	**9.4**
Other	4.6	-	**3.6**	-	13.3	**3.3**	-	-	-
No opinion or respondent critiqued a particular news organization	30.2	28.0	**29.7**	13.0	-	**9.8**	7.1	20.0	**13.2**
n=	*86*	*25*	***111***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

Why Do You Feel the Network News Has or Has Not Covered Congress Well? (by Party)

Multiple Responses Allowed	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Depth of news coverage is good/poor	41.9%	30.6%	**36.9%**	64.9%	54.2%	**60.7%**	70.4%	53.8%	**62.3%**
Focus is not on Congress, but on the "big story," on controversy, on the executive branch, etc.	16.1	20.4	**18.0**	37.8	25.0	**32.8**	37.0	23.1	**30.2**
There's too much bias or editorializing in the press	3.2	24.5	**12.6**	5.4	29.2	**14.8**	-	15.4	**7.5**
Profits or ratings are the principal factors behind news coverage	8.1	6.1	**7.2**	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	3.7	3.8	**3.8**
Congress is difficult to cover because it is so complex	1.6	2.0	**1.8**	5.4	12.5	**8.2**	-	15.4	**7.5**
The quality of reporters is good/poor	1.6	2.0	**1.8**	-	4.2	**1.6**	3.7	-	**1.9**
Viewers get all the news they really want	1.6	2.0	**1.8**	2.7	-	**1.6**	11.1	7.7	**9.4**
Other	6.4	-	**3.6**	-	8.3	**3.3**	-	-	**-**
No opinion or respondent critiqued a particular news organization	32.3	26.5	**29.7**	16.2	-	**9.8**	3.7	23.1	**13.2**
n =	*62*	*49*	***111***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

6

The Committee System

"I know it's been said many times, but it is still true that the longer you stay around here, the better seniority looks." --a House Democrat

Prior to the Civil War, there were few standing congressional committees. Shortly after the war, the growth in the number of standing committees was dramatic, but both parties were able to control this committee growth by the turn of the century. The power of standing committees and their chairmen rose in the next few decades as party leaders either left or were forced to give up important committee assignments and as the seniority system became more dominant.

By the the 1940s, many members sought to change the committee system. While these reform-minded members were not strong enough to change the seniority system, they did succeed in passing the Legislative Reform Act of 1946, which reduced the number of committees and reorganized the jurisdictions of the remaining ones. Although this reorganization may have consolidated operations, it also consolidated the power of the committee chairmen. In the 1960s, the fight for committee reform went in two directions. Many members sought to stem the growth of committees and to reorganize jurisdictions. But reformers, particularly those in the House, also sought to reduce the role of the seniority system through their party caucuses.

In the early 1970s, both parties in the House modified the seniority system by giving party leaders and the rank-and-file members more control over the committee selection process and in electing committee chairmen. Both Senate parties approved similar selection rules in the mid-1970s. In 1977, Senators also voted for an overhaul of their whole committee system through the work of the Stevenson Committee, named for its chairman, Adlai Stevenson (D-IL). The Stevenson Committee succeeded in reducing the number of committee assignments any one Senator could have, in cutting the number of committees and subcommittees in the Senate from 205 to 130, and in consolidating some jurisdictions. But by 1984 there had been a slight increase in the number of committees and committee assignments, and a second committee, chaired by Senator Dan Quayle (R-IN), attempted to bring the numbers back down. The Quayle Committee, however, met with mixed success, as the number of Senate committee assignments was reduced from 231 to 214--short of the Committee's 204 target.

Committee reform in the House has been far more incremental. In the mid-1970s, a major committee reform effort led by Representative Richard Bolling (D-MO) was only partially successful, as were two later committees, headed by David Obey (D-WI) and Jerry Patterson (D-CA). But these incremental changes did succeed in rewriting some jurisdictions and in reducing the total number of House committees and subcommittees from 204 in 1975 to 172 in 1984.

6.1 Oversight

Legislative oversight covers four areas: first, fiscal oversight through budgetary review; second, the power to create or reorganize executive agencies; third, congressional investigative authority to follow up on legislation to see that "the intent of Congress" is being fulfilled; and, fourth, the power to confirm or impeach executive officials and judges.

But while these powers have existed since the beginning of Congress, the move to formalize and improve congressional oversight capability came in this century. The Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 created the General Accounting Office (GAO) as an agency independent of the executive branch to assist Congress in reviewing programs. But Congress itself did not make any effort to formalize its oversight functions until the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 which not only restructured committee jurisdictions along more rational lines but also requested committees to exercise "continuous watchfulness" over any agency or program in their jurisdiction.

Renewed interest in legislative oversight occurred in the mid-1970s. In part, this revived interest was an outgrowth of the congressional reform movement and the expanding government programs of the 1960s and early 1970s. Reformers believed more effective oversight and review of programs and agencies would lead to better budgeting and governmental management. During that time, committees and support agencies undertook oversight training programs and prepared "how to" manuals on oversight for committee and personal staff.

By the late 1970s and through the Reagan administration of the 1980s, the federal government had shifted from an era of expanding programs and budgets to one of declining budget growth and program cuts. The Reagan era also featured a number of conflicts between the administration and the legislature over the intent and implementation of policies approved by the Congress. Most would argue that this situation would favor increased legislative oversight to review programs, find savings, and improve efficiency. But statistics show the overall number of hearings in Congress is declining, and fewer hearings overall would suggest the number of oversight hearings is declining as well.

When Center interviewers suggested to respondents that the number of hearings in Congress was decreasing and asked if this was happening to oversight hearings as well, only 23.7 percent of members said that there was no decrease in congressional oversight. The leading answer, among 25.4 percent of members, was that there was not enough time to do oversight in the session. Some members specifically cited the budget process as the principal culprit in stealing time from oversight duties. "By the time [my committees] have finished with all our budget work," said a Senate Republican, "there is no time left to do some real oversight."

Another 12.3 percent of members said there was no real incentive for many members to do oversight. "Effective oversight is, of necessity, time consuming and tedious," said a Republican Senator. "To do it right, you have to hear an endless stream of witnesses, review numerous records, and at the end of it you may find an agency was doing everything right. It is much more fun to create a new program." A House Democrat thought one way to improve the oversight process was to pass a program "sunset" law to "force us to review the effectiveness of laws and programs that have existed for some time...[it] is not a substitute for good oversight, but since we are not doing enough oversight, we at least need such a law."

The next largest category of member responses was the 9.6 percent who tied declining oversight to political factors. This category had a decidedly partisan tilt, as the Senate respondents in this category were Democrats saying Republican Senators were reluctant to criticize the administration, while a handful of House Republicans thought Democrats did not want to tackle some favored programs.

This first question on oversight asked respondents to assess the situation throughout Congress. When Center interviewers followed up by asking respondents to judge the quality of oversight on their own committees, member dissatisfaction with the current state of oversight was apparent, especially in the Senate. Among members, 46.8 percent said their committees were not doing enough oversight, 35.8 said they were doing enough, and 10.1 percent said some of their committees did adequate oversight while others did not. However, 54.2 percent of Senators said their committees were not doing enough oversight, and another 16.6 percent said the level of oversight varied with the committee. Only 20.8 percent of the Senators surveyed believed their committees were doing enough oversight.

Some Studies Suggest Congressional Oversight May be Declining. Why do You Think May be Happening?

(by Chamber)

Members and Committee Staff Only	Members			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
There is not enough time in the session to do oversight	19.5%	44.4%	25.4%	25.0%	12.0%	18.9%
Congressional oversight is not declining	28.7	7.4	23.7	17.9	36.0	26.4
No incentives to do oversight	11.5	14.8	12.3	17.9	12.0	15.1
Most oversight is politically motivated	8.0	14.8	9.6	3.6	32.0	17.0
The budget process leaves members with no time to do oversight	5.7	14.8	7.9	17.9	24.0	20.8
Not enough resources are available to do oversight properly	2.3	3.7	2.6	7.1	4.0	5.7
Other	6.9	11.1	7.9	3.6	4.0	3.8
n=	*87*	*27*	*114*	*28*	*25*	*53*

Some Studies Suggest Congressional Oversight May be Declining. Why do You Think May be Happening? (by Party)

Members and Committee Staff Only	Members Democratic	Members Republican	Members Total	Committee Staff Democratic	Committee Staff Republican	Committee Staff Total
There is not enough time in the session to do oversight	29.2%	20.4%	**25.4%**	18.5%	19.2%	**18.9%**
Congressional oversight is not declining	26.1	20.4	**23.7**	25.9	26.9	**26.4**
No incentives to do oversight	10.8	14.3	**12.3**	7.4	23.1	**15.1**
Most oversight is politically motivated	10.8	8.2	**9.6**	18.5	15.4	**17.0**
The budget process leaves members with no time to do oversight	6.1	10.2	**7.9**	29.6	11.5	**20.8**
Not enough resources are available to do oversight properly	1.5	4.1	**2.6**	11.1	-	**5.7**
Other	4.6	12.2	**7.9**	-	7.7	**3.8**
n=	*65*	*49*	***114***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Are Your Committees Doing Enough Oversight? (by Party and Chamber)

Members Only	**Members**				**Total**
	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	
Yes	37.1%	34.0%	40.0%	20.8%	**35.8%**
No	48.4	44.7	44.7	54.2	**46.8**
Mixed	8.1	12.8	8.2	16.7	**10.1**
No Opinion	6.4	8.5	7.1	8.3	**7.3**
n=	*62*	*47*	*85*	*24*	***109***

6.2 Reactions to Specific Committee Reforms

Reducing Subcommittees

The Center also asked a series of questions on specific committee reforms. When asked if they would favor reducing the number of subcommittees, 65.8 percent of members said yes, 27.2 percent said no and 7 percent said they were not sure. Among Representatives, 67.8 percent favored reducing subcommittees, and among Senators 59.3 percent supported such reductions. But between parties, there are significant differences. Over 85 percent of Republicans favored reductions, while only 12.3 percent opposed them. But only a slight majority of Democrats, 50.8 percent, favored reductions, and 38.5 percent opposed them.

Among personal staff 59 percent favored reducing subcommittees while 39.3 percent opposed cuts. However, committee staff were much stronger in their opposition to subcommittees. Almost 70 percent of committee staff favored reducing subcommittees, 20.8 percent opposed reductions, and 9.4 percent were not sure. But because the committee respondents to the Center's survey all worked for the full committee, this result is hardly surprising. Competition between committee and subcommittee staff has long been a fact of life on Capitol Hill.

Requiring More Committee Assignment Limits

Requiring parties to set more stringent limits on the total number of committee and subcommittee assignments any member can have proved to be more controversial than the question on reducing subcommittees. Even so, 54.9 percent of members did favor more limits, while 42.5 percent opposed them. But there were some significant party and chamber differences on this question. In the last few years, Senators and House Republicans have struggled with their rules regarding committee assignments, so it is not surprising that Senators and Republicans strongly favor more stringent limits. Over 70 percent of Senators and 76 percent of all Republicans supported the tighter assignment limits. In contrast, a 54.8 percent majority of House Democrats opposed more assignment limits

Requiring More Joint Committee Hearings

The Center's next question was whether or not members would support more joint hearings conducted by separate committees. Within each chamber, the jurisdictions and the interests of different committees often overlap on a bill. Accordingly, many believe if more committees would hold joint hearings on bills rather than a number of different hearings among separate committees, Congress could cut down on duplicated effort. Over 80 percent of members, regardless of chamber or party, supported the idea. An equally strong level of support was seen among personal staff, with over 82 percent of respondents supporting such hearings. Committee staff, however, opposed such hearings by a 50.9 percent to 49.1 percent split--not one committee staffer had "no opinion." However, on this point there was a split between chambers as 53.6 percent of House staff favored having more joint hearings, while 56 percent of Senate staff opposed them.

For those members who said they supported joint hearings, Center interviewers followed up by asking if they also supported having more bicameral joint committee hearings. This proposal was supported by a narrow 50.5 percent majority of the respondents. Senators supported bicameral hearings by 55.3 percent to 38.3 percent, while House members opposed them by a 51.7 percent to 46.7 percent margin. But there were party differences on this question; 60 percent of Republicans favored bicameral joint hearings, while 48.8 percent of Democrats opposed the idea and 47.6 percent favored it. One House Republican expressed the feelings of many opponents to joint hearings by saying, "There is a reason the founders created two chambers, not one."

Committee staff were very much against bicameral joint hearings, with a little over 80 percent of committee staff opposed to them, and no significant differences in opposition between chambers or parties. The few committee staffers who supported such hearings claimed they could save time and effort by building a better consensus for legislation. But by and large, most committee staff agreed with the sentiment of one Democratic Senate staff director, "[Bicameral joint hearings] take too much time, effort and resources for so little in return."

Requiring Subcommittee Staff Cuts

When asked if subcommittee staff should be reduced, a 45.5 percent plurality of members supported reductions, 40.2 percent opposed them and 14.3 percent had no opinion. However, there were significant party differences on this issue. Staff reductions were supported by 67.3 percent of Republicans, with only 18.4 percent opposed and 14.3 percent not sure. Democrats, on the other hand, opposed restrictions by a 57.1 percent to 28.6 percent margin, also with 14.3 percent unsure.

What Changes in the Committee System Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Would you reduce the number of subcommittees?									
Yes	67.8%	59.3%	**65.8%**	56.5%	66.7%	**59.0%**	75.0%	64.0%	**69.8%**
No	25.3	33.3	**27.2**	41.3	33.3	**39.3**	17.9	24.0	**20.8**
No Opinion/Don't know	6.9	7.4	**7.0**	2.2	-	**1.7**	7.1	12.0	**9.4**
n=	*87*	*27*	***114***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***
Would you require the parties to place more stringent limits on the number of committees and subcommittees on which any member can serve or chair?									
Yes	48.3	76.9	**54.9**	34.8%	66.7	**42.6**	71.4%	76.0%	**73.6%**
No	49.4	19.2	**42.5**	52.2	33.3	**47.5**	28.6	20.0	**24.5**
No Opinion/Don't know	2.3	3.9	**2.6**	13.0	-	**9.9**	-	4.0	**1.9**
n=	*87*	*26*	***113***	*46*	*15*	***61***	*28*	*25*	***53***

What Changes in the Committee System Would You Support? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Would you reduce the number of subcommittees?									
Yes	50.8%	85.7%	**65.8%**	54.0%	66.7%	**59.0%**	63.0%	76.8%	**69.8%**
No	38.5	12.2	**27.2**	43.3	33.3	**39.3**	29.6	11.5	**20.8**
No Opinion/Don't know	10.7	2.1	**7.0**	2.7	-	**1.7**	7.4	11.5	**9.4**
n=	*65*	*49*	***114***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***
Would you require the parties to place more stringent limits on the number of committees and subcommittees on which any member can serve or chair?									
Yes	42.2	71.4	**54.9**	37.8%	50.0	**42.6**	66.7%	80.8%	**73.6%**
No	54.7	26.5	**42.5**	54.1	37.5	**47.5**	29.6	19.2	**24.5**
No Opinion/Don't know	3.1	2.1	**2.6**	8.1	12.5	**9.9**	3.7	-	**1.9**
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

What Changes in the Committee System Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Encourage committees to schedule more joint hearings with other committees, rather than scheduling several separate hearings on the same topic?									
Yes	85.1%	80.0%	84.1%	78.3%	93.3%	82.0%	53.6%	44.0%	49.1%
No	13.8	15.4	14.2	19.6	-	14.8	46.4	56.0	50.9
No Opinion/Don't know	1.1	3.8	1.7	2.1	6.7	3.2	-	-	-
n=	*87*	*26*	*113*	*46*	*15*	*61*	*28*	*25*	*53*
If you favor more joint committee hearings, would you like to see more bicameral joint hearings?									
Yes	47.6%	60.0%	50.5%	37.8%	50.0%	41.2%	20.8%	13.6%	17.4%
No	48.8	36.0	45.8	54.1	50.0	52.9	75.0	86.4	80.4
Don't know	3.6	4.0	3.7	8.1	-	5.9	4.2	-	2.2
n=	*82*	*25*	*107*	*37*	*14*	*51*	*24*	*22*	*46*

What Changes in the Committee System Would You Support? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Repubican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Encourage committees to schedule more joint hearings with other committees, rather than scheduling several separate hearings on the same topic?									
Yes	82.8%	85.7%	**84.1%**	86.5%	75.0%	**82.0%**	48.2%	50.0%	**49.1%**
No	15.6	12.2	**14.2**	13.5	16.7	**14.8**	51.8	50.0	**50.9**
No Opinion/Don't know	1.6	2.1	**1.7**	-	8.3	**3.2**	-	-	-
n=	*64*	*49*	***113***	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***
If you favor more joint committee hearings, would you like to see more bicameral joint hearings?									
Yes	46.7%	55.3%	**50.5%**	40.6%	42.1%	**41.2%**	16.7%	18.2%	**17.4%**
No	51.7	38.3	**45.8**	53.1	52.6	**52.9**	83.3	77.3	**80.4**
Don't know	1.6	6.4	**3.7**	6.3	5.3	**5.9**	-	4.5	**2.2**
n=	*60*	*47*	***107***	*32*	*32*	***51***	*24*	*22*	***46***

What Changes in the Committee System Would You Support? (by Chamber)

	Members			**Personal Staff**			**Committee Staff**		
	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**	House	Senate	**Total**
Would you restrict the number of legislative staffers assigned to subcommittees?									
Yes	50.0%	30.8%	**45.5%**	26.7%	40.0%	**30.0%**	60.7%	64.0%	**62.3%**
No	37.2	50.0	**40.2**	57.8	53.3	**56.7**	32.1	36.0	**34.0**
No Opinion/Don't know	12.8	19.2	**14.3**	15.6	6.7	**13.3**	7.1	-	**3.7**
n=	*86*	*26*	***112***	*45*	*15*	***60***	*28*	*25*	***53***

What Changes in the Committee System Would You Support? (by Party)

	Members			Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Democratic	Republican	**Total**
Would you restrict the number of legislative staffers assigned to subcommittees?									
Yes	28.6%	67.3%	**45.5%**	21.6%	43.5%	**30.0%**	44.4%	80.8%	**62.3%**
No	57.1	18.4	**40.2**	70.5	34.8	**56.7**	48.1	19.2	**34.0**
No Opinion/Don't know	14.3	14.3	**14.3**	8.1	21.7	**13.3**	7.5	-	**3.7**
n=	*63*	*49*	***112***	*37*	*23*	***60***	*27*	*26*	***53***

6.3 House Democrats and the Seniority System in Selecting Chairmen

Because of continuing controversies in their party's committee chairman selection process, House Democrats were asked a question on the extent to which seniority should be used as a guide in choosing chairmen. The Center asked House Democrats if their Caucus Steering and Policy Committee should be required to nominate candidates for committee chairman in order of seniority. Currently, Democratic committee chairman candidates are nominated by the Caucus Steering and Policy Committee. If a nominee is rejected by the full Caucus, members can offer their own chairman nominees who will compete against each other. The Center asked House Democrats if they would favor amending the rules so that if a Steering and Policy Committee nominee was rejected, the most senior committee member would be the next chairman nominee and would be either affirmed or rejected by a majority vote of the full Caucus; should that nominee be rejected, the Caucus would go down the committee seniority list until a new chairman was elected.

The results on this proposal were evenly split, with 49 percent favoring a proposal requiring greater reliance on seniority in selecting chairmen, 47.1 percent favoring no change in the current rules, and 3.9 percent having no opinion. Democrats favoring the proposition believed that a stricter adherence to seniority rank was fair in making committee selections, as long as the caucus continued to have the right of refusal. Many Democrats supported stricter seniority selection rules as a way of adding coherence and stability to the process. "[Such a rule] would cut down on many of the controversies we now have," said one younger Democratic member.

Many House Democrats who favored a greater reliance on seniority cited the 1987 fight between Representatives Les Aspin (D-WI) and Marvin Leath (D-TX) over who would be chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. One Democrat who supported using seniority in selecting chairmen disputed the claim that this controversy had anything to do with the seniority system. "[The supporters of Marvin Leath] claimed they were supporting the cause of seniority, but they were being opportunists--Leath had less seniority than Aspin and [his supporters] just used the seniority issue to pick up a few votes. The House has to decide if seniority has a value, and if it does, it should be used fully and not in pieces."

Those who opposed requiring the Steering and Policy Committee to nominate on the basis of seniority thought such a rule was unnecessary because seniority is often adhered to in selecting chairman nominees. Many opponents to using seniority as a requirement for nomination also believed the rank and file should continue to have the option, as the current rules allow, of nominating candidates for committee chairman if the Steering and Policy Committee's nominee is rejected. "[Committee chairman nominees are] largely decided through seniority already," said one Democrat, "and that's fine, but we do need to be sure the members and the Caucus act as a kind of check on the process."

Would You Favor Having the House Democratic Caucus Vote on Committee Chairmen by Seniority Rank?
(by Party and Chamber)

Members House Democrats Only	Total
Yes	49.0%
No	47.1
No Opinion/Don't Know	3.9
n=	*51*

6.4 Open Mark-Up Sessions

In the early 1970s, open legislative mark-up sessions were an important goal of congressional reformers. Prior to the reforms, committee chairmen or others often used closed sessions to complete legislative business. But such secrecy frequently left the public in the dark about a large portion of the members' legislative record. Open mark up sessions were approved in the House in 1973 and in the Senate by 1975. Shortly thereafter, both chambers wrote rules requiring open House-Senate conference committee meetings as well.

However, some have suggested that in the interest of legislative efficiency, members may try to use more closed mark-up sessions to write complex or controversial legislation. Certainly, in the last few years there have been some significant closed mark-ups on major legislation--such as the closed meetings used by the conferees to write the Tax Reform Act of 1986. But an overwhelming majority of members believed there should be only a limited use of closed mark-ups.

Overall, 47.4 percent of members wanted their committees to have the same number of open mark-ups and 32.5 percent of members wanted more open mark-up sessions, for a total of 79.2 percent. It should also be noted that many of the respondents who gave the "same number of open mark-ups" answer said they belonged to committees where the mark-ups were already open. "You can't have any more open mark-ups than that," said one House Democrat. Only 14.9 percent of members and 18.9 percent of committee staff supported fewer open mark-ups.

Among those who favor fewer open mark-ups, most cited greater efficiency and the ability to operate freely without being pressured by interest groups. "We need more closed meetings," said one Democratic Representative, "because right now in these conferences, you've got the lobbyists hanging over you like vultures over a calf." But this was decidedly a minority opinion. One Republican Representative who has worked in both closed and open mark-ups concluded that open ones are better, even though closed ones go faster. "In a closed meeting, there is no posturing to the 'Gucci suit' types who are paid $450 to watch us...[But it doesn't matter because] after a [closed] meeting everyone will find out how you voted anyway, so you may as well keep them open."

Other members did not accept the notion that closed conference committee meetings made their work more efficient. "Look, whether a conference is closed or open is irrelevant," said one House Democrat who supported more open meetings. "You're not going to cut deals in the middle of a conference, you're going to work with people in advance to get things ready." But most respondents believed the meetings should be open. "I've been in a closed meeting; they do take less time," said a House Republican, "but I think the public's right to know what we do [should prevent] more closed meetings."

Would You Like to See More, Fewer, or the Same Number of Open Mark Up Sessions? (by Chamber)

Members and Committee Staff Only	Members			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
More	32.2%	33.3%	32.5%	14.3%	12.0%	13.2%
Same number	50.6	37.0	47.4	64.3	52.0	58.5
Fewer	10.3	29.7	14.9	14.3	24.0	18.9
No opinion/Don't Know	6.9	-	5.2	7.1	12.0	9.4
n=	*87*	*27*	*114*	*28*	*25*	*53*

Would You Like to See More, Fewer, or the Same Number of Open Mark Up Sessions? (by Party)

Members and Committee Staff Only	Members Democratic	Republican	**Total**	Committee Staff Democratic	Republican	**Total**
More	32.3%	32.6%	**32.5%**	11.1%	15.4%	**13.2%**
Same number	47.7	46.9	**47.4**	70.4	46.1	**58.5**
Fewer	13.8	16.3	**14.9**	11.1	26.9	**18.9**
No opinion/Don't Know	6.1	4.2	**5.2**	7.4	11.6	**9.4**
n=	*65*	*49*	*114*	*27*	*26*	*53*

Why Would You Like to See More, Fewer, or the Same Number of Open Mark Up Sessions?
(by Chamber)

Members and Committee Staff Only	Members House	Members Senate	Members Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
Respondent generally supports open meetings	29.9%	33.3%	**30.7%**	54.2%	33.3%	**43.8%**
Closed mark ups are more efficient/easier to make deals	6.9	14.8	**8.8**	20.8	12.5	**16.7**
Open meetings are inefficient	5.7	3.7	**5.3**	4.2	12.5	**8.3**
Meetings should be closed for national security reasons	3.4	3.7	**3.5**	16.7	8.3	**12.5**
Other	1.5	3.7	**1.8**	4.2	8.3	**6.3**
No response	52.9	40.7	**50.0**	-	25.0	**12.5**
n =	*87*	*27*	***114***	*24*	*24*	***48***

Why Would You Like to See More, Fewer, or the Same Number of Open Mark Up Sessions?
(by Party)

Members and Committee Staff Only	Members			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Respondent generally supports open meetings	33.8%	26.5%	30.7%	47.8%	40.0%	43.8%
Closed mark ups are more efficient/easier to make deals	10.8	6.1	8.8	8.7	24.0	16.7
Open meetings are inefficient	3.8	8.2	5.3	8.7	8.0	8.3
Meetings should be closed for national security reasons	1.5	6.1	3.5	21.7	4.0	12.5
Other	3.8	-	1.8	8.7	4.0	6.3
No response given	47.7	53.1	50.0	4.3	20.0	12.5
n=	*65*	*49*	*114*	*23*	*25*	*48*

6.5 Relationships Between Majority and Minority Committee Staffs

Some observers have suggested that Congress has become increasingly partisan in the last few years and that partisan disputes have made it more difficult to achieve consensus on the issues. These partisan disputes are often evident during floor debate, and some believe partisan conflict has increased within committees as well. Since much of the work of Congress must be done in committee, an increase in partisan conflict would make legislative consensus extremely difficult.

To determine whether committee operations were becoming more partisan, the Center asked the committee staff to describe their relationships with colleagues on the other side of the aisle. Rather than strong partisan conflicts, the results indicate just the opposite--"excellent" and "good" relationships were answers given 39.6 percent each, for a total of 79.2 percent of committee staff who say they have cordial relations with the other party. In fact, only one House Republican said relationships between the parties on his committee were poor.

Significantly, the partisan differences in these answers were slight. Among Democrats, 51.9 percent said relations were excellent and 33.3 percent said they were good, for a total 85.2 percent. While Republicans were less prone to say relations were excellent, they too gave predominantly positive responses. For Republicans, 26.9 percent said relationships were excellent and 46.2 percent said they were good, for a total of 73.1 percent. Senate staff had a higher percentage of positive responses, with 88 percent saying relationships were good or excellent, compared with 71.4 percent in the House.

When respondents were asked to explain their answers on relationships between the parties, the two most frequent responses were that the chairmen or committee members set the tone for the rest of the committee, or that the technical nature of the issues facing that committee encouraged bipartisan relations. The "personalities" of members and staff were mentioned by 28.8 percent of the respondents. Occasionally, personalities were said to contribute to poor relationships. One staff director gave a vivid description of the consequences when partisan conflict reaches the committee staff level. "[This conflict] reaches all the way down to the subcommittee level," he said, "so we don't work out our differences among staff, the disagreements reach the members and will be reflected all the way to the full committee. It's a helluva way to get things done." But this was an exception, as most respondents said friendly personal relations between chairmen and staff on both parties led to good relationships on the committee. Said one Senate Republican, "Relationships are very good here--in fact, some of the staff on this committee have worked for both parties [on this committee] at one time or another."

How Would You Characterize the Relationship Between the Majority and Minority Staffs of This Committee? (by Party and Chamber)

Committee Staff Only	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	Total
Excellent	51.8%	26.9%	42.9%	36.0%	39.6%
Good	33.3	46.1	27.5	52.0	39.6
Fair	7.5	7.7	10.7	4.0	7.5
Poor	-	3.8	3.6	-	1.9
No clear pattern has been established	3.7	11.5	10.7	4.0	7.5
Not applicable because staff is nonpartisan	3.7	3.9	3.6	4.0	3.9
n=	27	26	28	25	53

What Affects the Relationship Between the Majority and Minority Staff? (by Party and Chamber)

Committee Staff Only	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	Total
The technical nature of the Committee's issues determines the nature of the relationship	34.6%	38.5%	44.4%	48.0%	36.5%
Chairman/committee members set the tone for staff relationships	30.8	38.5	25.9	24.0	34.6
Personalities or professionalism of staff sets the relationship	30.8	26.9	29.6	28.0	28.8
Staff relationships have traditionally been good	26.9	11.5	18.5	20.0	19.2
Legislative procedures or communication between committee staffs sets the tone of the relationship	11.5	11.5	18.5	4.0	11.5
No opinion or reasons given	7.7	11.5	11.1	8.0	9.6
n =	*26*	*26*	*27*	*25*	*52*

6.6 Office Informational Support For Staff

Information management in congressional offices is critical, but there are significant differences in the information needs of personal and committee staffs. Personal staffs have to advise their members on literally thousands of bills and amendments that will not be considered before their committees. Though individual members can be advised by their parties, their constituents, or interest groups, they still need additional information to make their decisions. Thus, personal staff will try to quickly gather information on these topics as it is needed. Members are also advised by their committee staffs, which requires committee staff to seek out accurate and reliable sources of information both on and off Capitol Hill.

The changing nature and needs of Congress have encouraged members to create many informational organizations known as Legislative Support Groups (LSGs) to provide needed information and analysis. The largest and oldest of these is the Congressional Research Service (CRS) of the Library of Congress. Although it has existed since the early part of the century, the Congressional Research Service as it is today was formed through the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970. CRS is usually the first organization staffers turn to for help. Other LSGs include the General Accounting Office (GAO), created by the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 as an agency "independent of the executive departments" to aid legislators in seeing that the executive branch properly and effectively carries out programs enacted by Congress. The Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) was created in 1972 to assist members and staff in evaluating the legal and social impact of many new technologies.

The survey showed strong staff satisfaction with the performance of these support organizations. A little over 90 percent of personal staff and 63 percent of committee staff were satisfied with the information provided by LSGs on a bill's national impact. As one Republican House staffer put it, "as far as the minority is concerned, God created the CRS." When personal staff were asked if they were satisfied with the information provided by LSGs on a bill's state and local impact, 63 percent said they were, though many qualified that statement by saying better information on these topics is usually available back in their home state.

Though general satisfaction with congressional support agencies was high, most staff respondents saw room for improvement. While a third of committee staff and a little more than a quarter of personal staff had no further suggestions to make regarding LSGs, there were many others who recommended improvements. One improvement favored by many staffers was in the congressional computer system, in terms of both data retrieval and quality of the data on the system. Among committee staff, 19.6 percent suggested improved staff resources--though most respondents wanted this improved staff for themselves. "Don't give more staff to [the support groups]," said a Senate Democratic committee staff director, "give it to me. Committees need more resources, [the LSGs] have enougn."

But on the whole, staff was satisfied with the performance of LSG's. If anything, some personal staff were concerned that so much information is available, that an office could be overloaded with material. One Democratic aide to a Representative said, "If you are not careful, you can get caught up with collecting and reading this information and not be able to get any other work done."

Because of the specialized nature and needs of committees, staffers frequently need to seek resources off Capitol Hill. Of committee staff respondents, 87 percent said they seek information from "off the Hill" sources. The few that did not seek such information belonged to highly specialized committees that deal with congressional procedures or operations, such as House Rules.

When asked which non-congressional sources were most used, almost 40 percent first mentioned interest group lobbyists or industry representatives. As one Democratic Senate staff director put it "our first responsibility is to hear from anybody that will be affected by the legislation." The second most frequently mentioned sources were the administration and executive agencies, though Republicans mentioned this group slightly more often than Democrats. "The administration and the agencies are good for all the technical background information you need on issues," said one Republican House staff director. "They have a lot of experts you can contact at a moment's notice."

Are You Satisfied with the Information Provided by Legislative Support Agencies on a Bill's National Impact?
(by Chamber)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	Personal Staff House	Personal Staff Senate	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff House	Committee Staff Senate	Committee Staff Total
Yes	95.7%	73.3%	90.2%	71.4%	71.4%	69.8%
No	6.6	26.7	6.6	21.4	12.0	17.0
Their Performance is Mixed	3.3	-	3.3	7.1	16.0	11.3
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	-	4.0	1.9
n=	*46*	*15*	*61*	*27*	*26*	*53*

Are You Satisfied with the Information Provided by Legislative Support Agencies on a Bill's National Impact?
(by Party)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	Personal Staff Democratic	Personal Staff Republican	Personal Staff Total	Committee Staff Democratic	Committee Staff Republican	Committee Staff Total
Yes	89.2%	91.1%	**90.2%**	74.1%	65.4%	**69.8%**
No	8.1	4.2	**6.6**	14.8	19.2	**17.0**
Their Performance is Mixed	2.7	4.2	**3.3**	11.1	11.5	**11.3**
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	-	-	-	3.8	**1.9**
n=	*37*	*24*	***61***	*27*	*26*	***53***

Are You Satisfied with the Information Provided by Legislative Support Agencies on a Bill's State and Local Impact?
(by Party and Chamber)

Personal Staff Only	Personal Staff				
	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Yes	72.2%	50.0%	63.0%	64.3%	**63.3%**
No	19.4	33.3	23.9	28.6	**25.0**
Their Performance is Mixed	8.3	12.5	10.9	7.1	**10.0**
No Opinion/Don't Know	-	4.2	2.2	-	**1.7**
n=	*36*	*24*	*27*	*26*	*53*

Do You Ever Seek Information from Sources Off the Hill? (by Party and Chamber)

Committee Staff Only	**Committee Staff** Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Yes	88.9%	84.6%	92.9%	80.0%	**86.8%**
No	11.1	15.4	7.1	20.0	**13.2**
n=	*27*	*26*	*28*	*25*	*53*

What Off the Hill Information Sources Do You Use Most Frequently? (by Party and Chamber)

Committee Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Committee Staff				
	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	Total
Lobbyists/Interest Group Representatives in General	66.7%	64.0%	78.6%	50.0%	65.4%
Executive Agencies	22.2	44.0	28.6	37.5	32.7
Academics/Experts/Issue Specialists	29.6	28.0	32.1	25.0	28.8
White House Staff/Administration Officials	18.5	40.0	28.6	29.2	28.8
Industry Groups	22.2	32.0	14.3	41.7	26.9
Trade Associations	22.2	8.0	14.3	16.7	15.4
State/Local Government Officials/Agencies	11.1	20.0	21.4	8.3	15.4
"Think Tank" Groups	14.8	12.0	7.1	20.8	13.5
Press Reporters	-	8.0	3.6	4.2	3.8
Consultants	3.7	-	-	4.2	1.9
Embassies	3.7	-	-	4.2	1.9
n=	*27*	*25*	*28*	*24*	*52*

What Improvements Would You Make in the Hill's Information Support System? (by Party)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	Democratic	Republican	Total	Democratic	Republican	Total
Improve the quality/speed of the computer support system	21.6	16.7	19.7	16.0%	16.0%	16.0%
Improve the quality of access to the Hill's databases	21.6	8.3	16.4	16.0	8.0	12.0
Improvements needed in support agencies' staffing and resources	13.5	8.3	11.5	24.0	20.0	22.0
Support agencies need to schedule work better to allow staff more time to use the information they provide	10.8	4.2	8.2	-	-	-
Improvements needed in the political parties' information systems	10.8	-	6.6	-	-	-
Improvements needed in committee's information support	8.1	4.2	6.6	4.0	-	2.0
Improvements needed in communicating information to members and staff	8.1	-	4.9	4.0	4.0	4.0
More training needed for new staff	2.7	8.3	4.9	4.0	-	2.0
Other	5.4	-	3.3	-	8.0	4.0
No suggestions/Don't know	18.9	50.0	31.1	40.0	48.0	44.0
Eliminate political bias in information	-	-	-	-	12.0	6.0
n=	*37*	*24*	*61*	*25*	*25*	*50*

What Improvements Would You Make in the Hill's Information Support System? (by Chamber)

Personal and Committee Staff Only	Personal Staff			Committee Staff		
	House	Senate	Total	House	Senate	Total
Improve the quality/speed of the computer support system	13.0%	40.0%	19.7%	14.8%	17.4%	1%
Improve the quality of access to the Hill's databases	21.7	-	16.4	3.7	21.7	12.0
Improvements needed in support agencies' staffing and resources	15.2	-	11.5	22.2	21.7	22.0
Support agencies need to schedule work better to allow staff more time to use the information they provide	10.9	-	8.2	-	-	-
Improvements needed in the political parties' information systems	4.3	13.3	6.6	-	-	-
Improvements needed in committee's information support	8.7	-	6.6	3.7	-	2.0
Improvements needed in communicating information to members and staff	2.2	13.3	4.9	3.7	4.3	4.0
More training needed for new staff	2.2	13.3	4.9	3.7	-	2.0
Other	2.2	6.7	3.3	48.1	4.3	4.0
No suggestions/Don't know	32.6	26.7	31.1	7.0	39.1	44.0
Eliminate political bias in information	-	-	-		4.3	6.0
n=	*46*	*15*	*61*	*27*	*23*	*50*

6.7 Staff Use of Caucuses as an Information Resource

The Center asked personal staff about their use of one of the fastest-growing resources on Capitol Hill, caucuses or Legislative Service Organizations (LSOs). Party caucuses like the Democratic Caucus and the Republican Conference have existed for many years. But beyond these party organizations, many members have traditionally come together or "caucused" over specific interests. In the 1950s a small group of House Democratic members, frustrated over the operations of the Democratic Caucus, formed their own party-related caucus, known as the Democratic Study Group (DSG).

After the DSG, several other such caucuses were created--most opened their doors in the 1970s and most were created by House members. There is a variety of LSOs, ranging from party groups (for example, the Democratic DSG and the Republican Conservative Opportunity Society), bipartisan groups addressing a single issue (the Environmental and Energy Study Conference and, on international trade, the Competitiveness Caucus), constituency caucuses (the Black Caucus and the Rural Caucus), and regional organizations (the Northeast-Midwest Coalition and the Sunbelt Caucus).

Congressional observers agree that these new caucus groups have given many members more opportunities to discuss issues and some members new leadership opportunities. But beyond opportunities for members to discuss and debate issues, many of these organizations provide legislative information. Congressional scholars have demonstrated that these caucus organizations have changed the flow of legislative information in the Congress. For example, in considering a specific bill, some staff might rely just as much on the DSG opinion as they on would the party leadership's position. Or personal staff might seek information on upcoming trade legislation from the Northeast-Midwest Coalition as well as the House Ways and Means Committee.

The survey indicated that caucus information is used. A total of 78.7 percent of personal staff said they use caucus information frequently or occasionally used, with only 21.3 percent saying they never or rarely use such information. Among the almost 80 percent who said they use caucus information, 20.4 percent said they use this information frequently, 42.9 percent said their use varies and usually depends on a particular issue, 30.6 percent said they use LSO information infrequently, and 6.1 percent either did not know or had no opinion.

When asked about the quality of caucus information, one organization, the Environmental and Energy Study Conference, was singled out for so much praise it required a separate category of its own. Other frequent comments were that these groups were very responsive, the quality of the information was good, or the interest specialization of LSOs was helpful and, rounding off the list, many respondents complimented a particular group or organization for its work.

On the negative side, the two most frequent criticisms were that the LSOs are politically motivated or that they focus too much on a single issue. These responses indicate that specialization is a virtue to many staffers and an annoyance to many others. A handful of other criticisms were mentioned with equal frequency--that caucus staffs were poor, that caucuses' responsiveness to requests is inadequate, or their information is not useful.

Do You Ever Use Information Provided by Congressional Caucuses? (by Party and Chamber)

Personal Staff Only	**Personal Staff**				**Total**
	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	
Yes/Sometimes	81.1%	75.0%	84.8%	60.0%	**78.7%**
No/Not very much	18.9	25.0	15.2	40.0	**21.3**
n=	*37*	*24*	*46*	*15*	52

How Often Do You Use Information Provided by Congressional Caucuses? (by Party and Chamber)

Personal Staff Only	**Personal Staff**				
	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	Total
Frequently	12.1%	37.5%	27.0%	0%	**20.4%**
Infrequently	33.3	25.0	29.8	33.3	**30.6**
Varies with circumstances	45.5	37.5	43.2	41.7	**42.9**
No Opinion/Don't Know	9.2	-	-	25.0	**6.1**
n=	*33*	*16*	*37*	*12*	***49***

Is the Information Provided by Congressional Caucuses Useful? (by Party and Chamber)

Personal Staff Only	**Personal Staff**				**Total**
	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	
Yes	31.4%	63.6%	53.5%	14.3%	43.9%
No	20.0	13.6	7.0	50.0	17.5
Varies with caucus	34.3	18.2	30.2	21.4	28.1
No Opinion/Don't Know	14.3	4.6	9.3	14.3	10.5
n=	*35*	*22*	*43*	*14*	57

Why Do You Like or Dislike Information Provided by Caucuses?
(by Party and Chamber)

Personal Staff Only Multiple Responses Allowed	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	Total
Positive Responses					
Information from a specifically mentioned group is good	19.2%	0%	0%	0%	11.6%
Information provided by the Environmental and Energy Study Conference is good	15.4	17.6	9.4	36.4	16.3
Caucus are very responsive	15.4	11.8	18.8	-	14.0
Quality of caucus information is good	11.5	11.8	15.6	-	11.6
Caucuses are good for specialized information	7.7	17.6	12.5	9.1	11.6
Caucus staffs are good	3.8	-	-	9.1	2.3
Negative Responses					
Information is poor because it is politically motivated	11.5	23.5	9.4	36.4	16.3
Caucus staffs are poor	11.5	-	6.3	9.1	7.0
Information from a specifically mentioned group is poor	11.5	-	6.3	9.1	7.0
Information is poor because it is too specialized or single issue oriented	11.5	11.8	6.3	27.3	11.6
Caucuses are not very responsive	7.7	5.9	9.4	-	7.0
Information is of poor quality generally	7.7	5.9	9.4	-	7.0
No opinion or reasons given	11.5	29.4	21.9	9.1	18.6
n=	*26*	*17*	*32*	*11*	*43*

6.8 *Personal Staff on Committee Scheduling Conflicts*

The Center asked personal staff if their members often have scheduling conflicts among their committees. Since personal staff must keep track of their member's work day, they have a clear idea of how members must allocate their time.

Because there are fewer Senators who can share the work, it is not surprising Senate staff reported far more scheduling conflicts than did their House counterparts. Over 90 percent of Senate staff said committee scheduling conflicts were frequent. In contrast, less than a third of House staff said these conflicts were frequent, a third said conflicts occured occasionally, and a little over 40 percent said scheduling conflicts almost never occur.

When staff were asked how the member decided which committee meeting to attend in the event of a conflict, the leading answer among chambers and parties was that the committee that was considering the most important or most interesting issue was usually the first choice. However, House Democrats and all Senate staff reported that equally important factor is when their member is chairman or ranking member of the committee or subcommittee holding the hearing.

How Frequently Does Your Member Have Scheduling Conflict Between Committees? (by Party and Chamber)

Personal Staff Only	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	Total
Always or frequently	43.2%	45.8%	28.3%	93.3%	44.3%
Sometimes	16.3	33.3	30.4	-	23.0
Infrequently or never	40.5	20.9	41.3	6.7	32.7
n=	*37*	*24*	*46*	*15*	*61*

How Does Your Member Decide Which Committee Meeting to Attend? (by Party and Chamber)

Personal Staff Only	Democratic	Republican	House	Senate	**Total**
Issue interest is key priority in selecting meetings	62.9%	63.6%	59.5%	73.3%	**63.2%**
When member is chairman/ranking member of committee/subcommittee	40.0	18.2	19.0	66.7	**31.6**
When hearing covers state/district concern	28.6	27.3	33.3	13.3	**28.1**
Markups or sessions where a vote will be taken	22.9	18.2	23.8	13.3	**21.1**
Whatever committee has the most urgent priority	17.1	22.7	21.4	13.3	**19.3**
Member first attends hearings where he is most needed	14.3	13.6	7.1	33.3	**14.0**
Member tries to attend as many hearings as possible	5.7	9.1	4.8	13.3	**7.0**
Other	5.7	9.1	7.1	6.7	**7.0**
No response	-	4.5	2.4	-	**1.8**
n =	*35*	*22*	*42*	*15*	57

7

Technical Notes

This survey was designed to be a bicameral survey of both members and staff. To accomplish this, the Center had to design a survey of issues and topics that encompassed the concerns of several groups of respondents. The Center also wanted to make its survey flexible enough to have questions on a few topics unique to a particular chamber or to staff. The interviews were completely confidential, to allow members and staff to express their unvarnished thoughts and opinions on Congress.

The final member sample closely paralleled the partisan make-up of the House and the Senate. The 87 Representatives interviewed included 51 Democrats and 36 Republicans, and reflected the party distribution in the 100th Congress--59 percent Democratic and 41 percent Republican. The 14 Senate Democrats and 13 Senate Republicans represent a 52 percent to 48 percent distribution, as compared to the 54 percent to 46 percent party ratio in the Senate.

To ensure a representative sample, the Center used several variables in its selection process. In the House, members were selected along party and regional lines and five categories of seniority. Because of the smaller size of the Senate,the longer terms of service and the balanced regional distribution (i.e., two members from each state) selecting the Senate sample was much simpler, requiring only a party breakdown and three seniority categories. The personal staff sample of 62 House and Senate staffers was selected using the same criteria. Because of the limited size of the committee staff sample, the selection process necessitated interviewing a senior committee person from each party on most of the major standing House and Senate committees, for a total of 53.

In designing the questionnaire, the Center contacted and interviewed several Congressional staff, former and current members of Congress and academics to isolate the issue areas of greatest concern on Capitol Hill. Once these issue areas had been isolated and researched, the Center, with advice from several social scientists involved in previous legislative surveys, designed its questionnaire form.

Designing the questionnaire presented several challenges. To interview such a highly specialized, elite group, a certain degree of openness was needed. At the same time, a measure of control was needed to ensure that a certain level of information was obtained on several topics. This task was made more difficult because members in particular have so little time to spend on interviews, so that the Center tried to design the questionnaire to cover all the information in a half hour to forty minutes. The final questionnaire used a combination of open-ended and closed-ended questions. The open-ended questions were designed to give respondents an opportunity to discuss their experiences and opinions. The closed-ended questions enabled all respondents to cover a number of diverse topics quickly. These closed-ended questions included a series of card questions on specific reform areas to allow the Center to gauge support for, or opposition to, a number of reform proposals that will be or may be considered by Congress in the near future.

The member questionnaire had nine principal topics: the budget process, the committee system, press coverage of Congress, personal time management, legislative procedures, the party leadership, the role of campaign finance and salary and ethics issues. Questions on personal time management were excluded from the staff questionnaire and replaced with questions on information management in personal and committee offices.

After pretesting the survey in November 1986, the Center made final revisions to enable the Center's interviewers to begin in January. The interviewing process began that January and was completed by May. Though the response rate among members was good, time constraints in certain cases and an office policy of "no surveys" in others required the Center to substitute some names in its original member sample. The Center had expected this to happen, however, and drew from a list of substitutes to ensure the sample represented an accurate cross section of members of Congress.

In selecting the personal staff sample, the Center tried to select staff of members who did not participate in the member survey. The Center adhered to that goal except for a handful of cases in the House. Respondents reactions to the interview varied with each individual case, though most were delighted to be given an opportunity to talk freely about their work, about Congress and about what they would like to see Congress doing.

Though most interviews took between 30 to 45 minutes on average, many members and staff interviews took far longer. One Senator told an interviewer they might not have a half hour to complete the survey and but then took 90 minutes. Other members and staffers took an hour by scheduling interviewers to come back between other appointments, or, in two cases, floor votes. By the end of the interview process, many respondents asked the interviewers the same question: "What is everyone else saying?"

Any organization or individual interested in more information on the Center's survey data should contact the Center at 1320 Ninteenth Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 857-0044.

A Special Note On Gender:

The Center's sample did allow for race and gender among members and staff. But women members presented a special problem in writing this report. Because there are only 25 women members overall and only a small percentage of women staff, it would be possible for an astute Capitol Hill observer to guess the source of some of the member quotes. Thus, to protect confidentiality, the feminine gender is not used when a respondent is quoted. All other gender-specific references have been kept to a minimum.

The following publications are also available from the Center:

___ Money and Politics: Campaign Spending Out of Control (3rd Edition Available February, 1987) $5.00

___ Ethics in Government: The Impact of Financial Disclosure on Spouses $5.00

___ Money and Politics: Soft Money--A Loophole for the '80s $5.00

___ Public Policy and Foundations: New Directions in Voter Particpation $5.00

___ Congressional Operations: "Not for the Short Winded:" Congressional Reform, 1961-1986 $7.50

___ Congressional Operations: The Role of Mail in Decision Making in Congress $7.50

___ Public Policy and Foundations: The Role of Politicians in Public Charities $7.50

___ Congressional Operations: Congress Speaks--A Survey of the 100th Congress $15.00

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